



# **Method of work of the Health Assembly**

## **Report by the Director-General**

Resolution WHA50.32 requests the Director-General, *inter alia*, to ensure that the documents related to the agendas of the Health Assembly and the Executive Board are distributed simultaneously and in good time in the six official languages. This document reports on the experience in implementing this resolution with respect to the 101st session of the Executive Board, including availability of documents in the six official languages on the Internet. A report on implementation of all requests contained in the resolution will be made to the Fifty-first World Health Assembly, as requested. The Board is invited to note the report and to confirm its agreement with the current policy concerning availability of documents on the Internet.

1. In adopting resolution WHA50.32, the Health Assembly reaffirmed the principle of equality among the official and the working languages of the Health Assembly and the Executive Board of the World Health Organization. It was understood that the Organization should implement the resolution within available resources.
2. The preparation of documentation for the 101st session of the Executive Board was the first experience in implementing the resolution. In practice, this required the setting of an upper limit for the total volume of documentation prepared for the Executive Board. Consequently, author units were requested to submit fewer and shorter documents so as not to exceed the set limit. Furthermore, with a view to making the best use of the available resources, special efforts were made in order to spread the workload as evenly as possible during the pre-session period.
3. The Director-General is pleased to report that in almost all cases the different services involved in the preparation of documentation for the governing bodies managed to produce the required documents for simultaneous and timely distribution in the six official languages.
4. A major management study of the translation process as part of the documentation chain at headquarters was undertaken during the last quarter of 1997 by a recognized consulting firm with the aim of enhancing the efficiency, quality and timeliness of translation services. The implementation of the study's recommendations should increase efficiency to permit savings.
5. As from 24 December 1997, governing body documents for forthcoming sessions are available in all languages on the Internet, two weeks after their dispatch.<sup>1</sup> Click on governing bodies, then on the desired

<sup>1</sup> Access via the WHO home page, <http://www.who.ch>

language. A list of documents for the forthcoming (or current) session will appear; those that are underlined are available in full text. For the time being there is a two-week lag between the dispatch date and the date the documents appear on the Internet so as not to disadvantage those who do not have access to Internet. This time-lag is shortened as the opening of the Board session approaches.

## **ACTION BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**

6. The Board is invited to note the report and to comment on any aspect it wishes relating to the availability of Board documents on the Internet.

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