

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FIFTH MEETING

**WHO headquarters, Geneva
Saturday, 26 January 2019, scheduled at 09:30**

Chairman: Dr P. SILLANAUKKEE (Finland)

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FIFTH MEETING

Saturday, 26 January 2019, at 09:30

Chairman: Dr P. SILLANAUKEE (Finland)

1. HUMAN RESOURCES: Item 9 of the agenda

Appointment of the Regional Director for South-East Asia: Item 9.1 of the agenda (document EB144/45)

**The meeting was held in private session until 10:45,
when it resumed in public session.**

At the invitation of the CHAIRMAN, the RAPPORTEUR read out the resolution on the appointment of the Regional Director for South-East Asia adopted by the Board in private session:¹

The Executive Board,

Considering the provisions of Article 52 of the Constitution of the World Health Organization;

Considering also the nomination made by the Regional Committee for South-East Asia at its seventy-first session,

1. REAPPOINTS Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh as Regional Director for South-East Asia as from 1 February 2019;

2. AUTHORIZES the Director-General to issue a contract to Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh for a period of five years from 1 February 2019, subject to the provisions of the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules.

The CHAIRMAN congratulated Dr Singh on her reappointment.

The REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR SOUTH-EAST ASIA thanked the Member States of the South-East Asia Region for her unanimous appointment for a second term as Regional Director, which reflected their desire to continue the progress made during her previous term, and honoured the work undertaken by the regional and country teams. WHO stood at a critical juncture in global health history and she emphasized the importance of universal health coverage in the Thirteenth General Programme of Work, 2019–2023, the transformation agenda and the WHO Impact Framework. WHO had a robust commitment to protecting people from health emergencies and promoting better health and well-being for all and responsibilities under the Declaration of Astana on primary health care. She would address the challenges being faced by WHO over the next five years through: sustaining gains made by ensuring that technical and operational frameworks were in place and that efforts towards disease elimination were maintained; accelerating sustainable progress by focusing on results at the country level and aligning targets with regional priorities; and finding innovative solutions to current and new challenges. She was committed to working with governments and partners to effect the change desired by Member States.

¹ Resolution EB144.R1.

The DIRECTOR-GENERAL congratulated Dr Singh on her well-deserved reappointment, which reflected the confidence, respect and trust that the Member States of the South-East Asia Region had rightly placed in her. He admired her dedication, energy, wisdom and vast experience in public health. As the first woman to be appointed as Regional Director for South-East Asia, she had exercised dynamic leadership in that Region, which accounted for 25% of the world's population but had a disproportionate burden of disease, and she had been a champion for women's empowerment. He noted her country-focused approach, which was one of the key themes of the Thirteenth General Programme of Work and the transformation agenda. He listed several accomplishments in the Region under her leadership, including the finalization of multisectoral noncommunicable disease action plans, progress towards universal health coverage and access to essential medicines, national action plans on antimicrobial resistance, and significant progress in disease elimination. He wished Dr Singh every success and offered his full support over the coming years.

The representative of ALGERIA, speaking on behalf of the Member States of the African Region, congratulated Dr Singh on her reappointment. He wished her every success in her duties as Regional Director.

The representative of CHILE, speaking on behalf of the Member States of the Region of the Americas, congratulated Dr Singh on her reappointment, which was a clear sign of Member States' confidence in her leadership and capacity. Dr Singh had shown a spirit of public service throughout her career, which served as a reminder of the importance of clear and efficient technical collaboration between regional offices and Member States to strengthen national health systems in line with national priorities. Dr Singh had achieved lasting results through a participatory process and had been an active advocate for the inclusion of health in the Sustainable Development Goals.

The representative of IRAQ, speaking on behalf of the Member States of the Eastern Mediterranean Region, congratulated Dr Singh on her reappointment, which reflected Member States' appreciation of her leadership. In view of commonalities between the two regions, there were many opportunities for the Eastern Mediterranean Region and the South-East Asia Region to share experiences and learn from one another. She wished Dr Singh success in her vision to ensure health gains for people across the South-East Asia Region.

The representative of ISRAEL, speaking on behalf of the Member States of the European Region, congratulated Dr Singh on her reappointment and commended her on her leadership, which had led to several achievements in the South-East Asia Region, including in the areas of poliomyelitis, maternal and neonatal tetanus, and antimicrobial resistance. He wished her success in continuing to transform health systems and people's lives.

The representative of SRI LANKA endorsed Dr Singh's reappointment, which reflected Member States' acceptance of her leadership since taking up the post as the first female Regional Director in that Region. Dr Singh had demonstrated vision in addressing regional epidemiological and demographic health challenges, while advancing universal health coverage and ably handling public health crises and natural disasters. She ensured that regional health priorities were included in the global health agenda. He noted the continued support she had given to tackling health issues in Sri Lanka. Given her impressive experience, he had no doubt that the collective vision of universal health coverage was safe in her hands.

The representative of INDONESIA, speaking on behalf of the Member States of the South-East Asia Region, congratulated Dr Singh on her reappointment. In her national capacity, she noted Dr Singh's vast experience and broad knowledge of regional and global affairs and their interconnectedness with health issues. In her previous five years as Regional Director, Dr Singh had

introduced several innovative responses to health challenges in the Region, which included the flagship priority programmes.

The representative of the PHILIPPINES¹, speaking on behalf of the Member States of the Western Pacific Region, congratulated Dr Singh on her reappointment. Having served with distinction as Regional Director for South-East Asia, Dr Singh had reaffirmed her intention to focus on priority issues relating to health challenges in the context of epidemiological and demographic shifts, the promotion of universal health coverage and the strengthening of health security. The Member States in his Region shared those priorities, and he noted the close working relationship between the two Regions in key areas. He looked forward to continued collaboration.

The representative of INDIA¹ congratulated Dr Singh on her reappointment and thanked the Executive Board and the Member States of the South-East Asia Region for their steady support for Dr Singh. Under her exceptional leadership, the South-East Asia Region had successfully funded and implemented many programmes. Dr Singh's commitment to public health was reflected in the significant achievements of the flagship priority programmes. The fact that Dr Singh was the first woman to be appointed as Regional Director of the Region was a source of satisfaction. He reiterated his Government's support for Dr Singh's vision for the Region over the coming years.

Appointment of the Regional Director for the Western Pacific: Item 9.2 of the agenda (document EB144/46)

At the invitation of the CHAIRMAN, the RAPPORTEUR read out the resolution on the appointment of the Regional Director for the Western Pacific adopted by the Board in private session:²

The Executive Board,
Considering the provisions of Article 52 of the Constitution of the World Health Organization;
Considering also the nomination made by the Regional Committee for the Western Pacific at its sixty-ninth session,

1. APPOINTS Dr Takeshi Kasai as Regional Director for the Western Pacific as from 1 February 2019;
2. AUTHORIZES the Director-General to issue a contract to Dr Takeshi Kasai for a period of five years from 1 February 2019, subject to the provisions of the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules.

The CHAIRMAN congratulated Dr Kasai on his appointment and conveyed the Board's best wishes for success in his post.

At the invitation of the CHAIRMAN, Dr Kasai took the oath of office contained in Staff Regulation 1.10 and signed his contract.

The REGIONAL DIRECTOR-ELECT FOR THE WESTERN PACIFIC thanked the Executive Board for appointing him as Regional Director for the Western Pacific. He acknowledged the leadership shown by his predecessor, who had helped transform WHO into a more country-focused organization

¹ Participating by virtue of Rule 3 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board.

² Resolution EB144.R2.

and supported Member States to significantly improve the health of their populations. He hoped to be able to build on that legacy.

At a time of great economic, social and environmental change for the Region, WHO needed to stay ahead of the curve to remain relevant and valuable. Although there were great challenges ahead, they could be overcome with the help of innovation and new technologies. By acting today to address tomorrow's challenges, those challenges could be turned into shared opportunities. At the same time, it was important to remember the fundamentals; as Regional Director, he would do his best to strengthen primary health care in the Region and ensure that health care workers could enjoy fulfilling careers. The Western Pacific Region was vast and diverse and although its Member States required tailored approaches, they also shared common ambitions. The Secretariat therefore needed to support both national and regional health aspirations through close dialogue and a good understanding of realities on the ground; regional offices played an important role in that respect. He looked forward to working with the Director-General and other regional directors to deliver the Thirteenth General Programme of Work, 2019–2023 and its vision of health as a driver of global development. He also looked forward to working with the Region's dedicated staff, committed Member States and capable partners.

The DIRECTOR-GENERAL congratulated Dr Kasai on his unanimous appointment, recognizing his 15 years of service to the Organization. His campaign priorities of health security, climate change, and noncommunicable diseases and ageing were perfectly aligned with those of the Organization and Dr Kasai's focus on people-centred primary health care was welcome. The Western Pacific Region faced unique challenges but also had unlimited potential. He looked forward to working with Dr Kasai to create a healthier, safer and fairer future for the people living there.

At the invitation of the CHAIRMAN, the RAPPORTEUR read out a resolution of appreciation adopted by the Board in private session:¹

The Executive Board,

Desiring on the occasion of the retirement of Dr Shin Young-soo as Regional Director for the Western Pacific, to express its appreciation for his services to the World Health Organization;

Mindful of Dr Shin Young-soo's lifelong, professional devotion to the cause of international health, and recalling especially his 10 years of service as Regional Director for the Western Pacific;

Recalling resolution WPR/RC69.R9, adopted by the Regional Committee for the Western Pacific, which designates Dr Shin Young-soo as Regional Director Emeritus,

1. EXPRESSES its profound gratitude and appreciation to Dr Shin Young-soo for his invaluable and longstanding contribution to the work of WHO;
2. ADDRESSES to him on this occasion its sincere good wishes for many further years of service to humanity.

The REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR THE WESTERN PACIFIC congratulated Dr Kasai on his appointment as the new Regional Director, highlighting the energy and commitment he would bring to the role. WHO had the noble mission of creating a better world through better health, which had made his own time as Regional Director the most satisfying period of his professional life. He had done his best to leave the Regional Office for the Western Pacific a stronger, more country-focused organization than it had been ten years ago. He was proud of the Organization's achievements in that regard and thanked the dedicated staff who had worked with him. He also thanked his colleagues in the Global

¹ Resolution EB144.R3.

Policy Group for their collaboration, noting that it was a valuable forum for decision-making by senior management. Observing that the world needed a successful WHO, which in turn relied on the success of its leader, he thanked the Director-General for his strong leadership and efforts to transform the Organization. Lastly, he thanked the Member States for their support. It had been a great honour to serve WHO and he wished the Organization every success in the future.

The DIRECTOR-GENERAL thanked the outgoing Regional Director, Dr Shin Young-soo, for his service, highlighting his valuable contribution to the Global Policy Group and the transformation agenda, his country-focused approach and his candour, which was a vital ingredient in helping organizations achieve better results. Dr Shin Young-soo's commitment to humanity was an inspiration and the Region had seen many advances during his term in office, including reduced maternal and child mortality rates, a reduction in deaths from tuberculosis, improvements in core capacities for emergencies and progress towards universal health coverage. His legacy would endure in the lives of the women, men and children he had served.

The representative of BENIN, speaking on behalf of the Member States of the African Region, congratulated Dr Kasai on his appointment, wishing him every success in the role, and expressed appreciation to the incumbent for his work.

The representative of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, speaking on behalf of the Member States of the Region of the Americas, offered congratulations to Dr Kasai, expressing confidence that his determined leadership would continue to strengthen the Region's resilience to existing and emerging health challenges. He thanked Dr Shin Young-soo for his leadership over the previous decade, drawing attention to the profound impact of his country-focused approach and his commitment to improving the health of the people in the Region.

The representative of LIBYA, speaking on behalf of the Member States of the Eastern Mediterranean Region, thanked Dr Shin Young-soo for his leadership, which had enabled WHO to better serve the countries of the Region. He congratulated Dr Kasai on his appointment and wished him all the best in continuing the work of WHO in the Region at a time when health threats, including climate change and multidrug resistance, were becoming increasingly complex.

The representative of ISRAEL, speaking on behalf of the Member States of the European Region, expressed deep appreciation for the leadership shown by Dr Shin Young-soo, whose guiding principle of placing countries at the centre of the Regional Office's work had set an example for the Organization as a whole. Other notable achievements during his term included reducing the incidence of tuberculosis, bringing the Region closer to eliminating malaria and increasing viral hepatitis immunization among children. He congratulated Dr Kasai on his appointment, expressing confidence that his experience in tackling emerging infectious diseases and improving health systems would greatly benefit the Region.

The representative of BHUTAN, speaking on behalf of the Member States of the South-East Asia Region, congratulated Dr Kasai on his appointment and wished him all the best in furthering the common objective of improving the health and well-being of all people. He thanked Dr Shin Young-soo for his tireless work during his time as Regional Director, noting the close working relationship between the Western Pacific and South-East Asia Regions, which would doubtless continue under the leadership of Dr Kasai.

The representative of JAPAN, speaking on behalf of the Member States of the Western Pacific Region, said that Dr Shin Young-soo had recognized the synergies between better health and socioeconomic development, helping to close the gap in health standards between countries in the

Region that had existed at the start of his tenure. Dr Shin Young-soo had also used his expertise in health care management to reform the Regional Office, building strong partnerships and leaving behind an efficient and effective regional structure.

The representative of AUSTRALIA thanked Dr Shin Young-soo for his strong and strategic leadership. She congratulated Dr Kasai on his appointment and said that his skills and wealth of experience would be invaluable to her Region in efforts to implement the Thirteenth General Programme of Work, 2019–2023 and attain the Sustainable Development Goals, with particular regard to health security and universal health coverage.

The representative of the REPUBLIC OF KOREA¹ said that Governments in his Region would work closely with Dr Kasai to improve the health of their populations, including through the opening of the WHO Asia-Pacific Centre for Environment and Health in 2019, which was a legacy of the work of Dr Shin Young-soo. He thanked the outgoing Regional Director for his achievements and dedication.

2. STRATEGIC PRIORITY MATTERS: Item 5 of the agenda (continued)

Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Item 5.4 of the agenda (document EB144/11 Rev.1)

The representative of BURUNDI, speaking on behalf of the Member States of the African Region, said that, despite progress in several areas, no significant progress had been made to improve treatment coverage for HIV and malaria, or to address air pollution or the other environmental determinants of health. A multisectoral and coordinated approach, led by Member States, would be required to achieve the established targets. The Secretariat should provide support and assistance for Member States to implement intersectoral approaches to address the social, environmental and economic determinants of health.

The representative of JAMAICA welcomed the focus on the Sustainable Development Goals in the Programme budget 2018–2019 and the Thirteenth General Programme of Work, 2019–2023, and commended WHO on its contribution to achieving the health-related Sustainable Development Goals at the country level through the implementation of resolution WHA69.11. The Secretariat should continue to support the strengthening of country policies and institutional frameworks for health systems.

The representative of ROMANIA, speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, said that the candidate countries Montenegro, Serbia and Albania, the country of the stabilization and association process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia aligned themselves with her statement. Greater momentum, commitment and action for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the local, national and international levels would be required if the Sustainable Development Goals were to be attained. He welcomed WHO's commitment to reform and its multisectoral approach to addressing health determinants in the Thirteenth General Programme of Work, with universal health coverage at the heart. A rights-based approach was also crucial; it was unacceptable that the family planning needs of millions of women remained unmet, and he noted the related slow progress in combating malnutrition both nationally and globally. Action should be taken to address the exponential rise in environmental threats, including efforts to raise public and political awareness of environment-related deaths, tackle air pollution, and increase funding to meet national water, sanitation and hygiene targets. To improve

¹ Participating by virtue of Rule 3 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board.

the alignment of funding with global public health needs, North–North, South–South and triangular cooperation should be explored further, and WHO should engage with the private sector and other global health partners. The use of evidence-based data, benchmarks and indicators should remain a priority.

The representative of MEXICO said that recognizing the inherent weaknesses in health systems was an important step towards attaining the Sustainable Development Goals. Member States should continue work to reduce maternal mortality and guarantee access to quality care during pregnancy and childbirth, with an emphasis on women from indigenous communities and adolescents. While progress had been made to decrease infant mortality, respiratory infections, stunting and obesity remained a concern. Work on a joint strategy to slow the increase in the prevalence of noncommunicable diseases should continue. National policies to implement the 2030 Agenda should include health aspects and involve all levels of government.

The representative of BAHRAIN said that several projects and programmes had been launched in her country in relation to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Noncommunicable diseases were a major obstacle to the achievement of the health-related Sustainable Development Goals and placed a significant economic burden on primary health care services.

The representative of the NETHERLANDS said that, although the presentation of extensive data and focus on multilateral cooperation in the document were appreciated, the next report should contain more information on WHO's collaboration with nongovernmental organizations to attain the Sustainable Development Goals. In the future, the data collected could be plotted against the Goal indicators to demonstrate the progress made. While the section on reproductive, maternal and child health, and nutrition was welcome, it was concerning that the report did not mention Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls) since none of the Goals could be attained in isolation; Sustainable Development Goal 3 (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages) could not be attained without equality for and an end to discrimination against women and girls. Sexual and reproductive health and rights were an indivisible part of universal health coverage.

The representative of INDONESIA applauded the role that WHO had been playing in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In his country, progress towards universal health coverage was on track, but there was a need to accelerate efforts to improve the level of many other key health indicators.

The representative of GERMANY said that the proposed global action plan for healthy lives and well-being for all must include concrete actions, particularly towards attaining universal health coverage. Furthermore, Member States, civil society and the private sector, as well as bilateral donors and UNODC, should be involved in its design. WHO should seek to derive maximum benefit from suitable multistakeholder initiatives, such as UHC2030 and the Providing for Health initiative. The involvement of other multilateral actors in the development of the proposed global action plan, such as ILO, IMF and WIPO, would generate a broader financing base and help to better address the determinants of health. Within the proposed global action plan, the responsibilities and mandates of each actor should be clearly defined.

The representative of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA said that he applauded the positive developments detailed in the report but noted with concern the lack of progress made in some critical areas such as maternal mortality, malaria and drug-resistant tuberculosis. The fact that many countries continued to have weak health systems was of particular concern, since that could lead to inadequate preparedness for health emergencies. He encouraged all ongoing efforts to address such issues. He wished to clarify that the Political Declaration of the Third High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases, which was a consensus document that had been agreed by Member States, contained no references to taxation. He called on the Secretariat to

provide more information on WHO's efforts to develop a global action plan for healthy lives and well-being for all. Consultations with Member States should be initiated immediately and continue throughout the process.

The representative of CHILE, speaking on behalf of the Member States of the Region of the Americas, said that a strong multisectoral approach was essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Addressing the social determinants of health would reduce health inequalities and inequities. She emphasized the importance of the link between Sustainable Development Goals 3 and 5. The PAHO Secretariat and its Member States had been working to harmonize the Sustainable Development Goals, the Thirteenth General Programme of Work and the Sustainable Health Agenda for the Americas 2018–2030: A Call to Action for Health and Well-Being in the Region in the development of PAHO's strategic plan for 2020–2025. She looked forward to the outcome of the 2019 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, which would guide future work.

The meeting rose at 12:30.

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