

WHO reform processes, including the transformation agenda, and implementation of United Nations development system reform

Report of the Executive Board Chairperson on the outcome of the informal consultation on governance reform

Report by the Director-General

1. The Director-General has the honour to transmit to the Executive Board at its 144th session the summary and proposed way forward submitted by the Chairperson of the Executive Board concerning the informal consultations on governance reform held on 13 and 14 September and 23 and 24 October 2018 (see Annex). Further to paragraph 9(d) of the Annex, a concept note reflecting the informal consultation's discussion on the participation of non-State actors in governing body meetings is contained in the appendix.

2. In relation to the proposals outlined in the summary and proposed way forward submitted by the Chairperson of the Executive Board, the Executive Board is invited to consider the following draft decision:

The Executive Board, having considered the Report of the Executive Board Chair on the outcome of the informal consultation on governance reform,¹ decided:

(1) to amend Rule 4 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board as set out in the Chairperson's summary and proposed way forward² following the informal consultation on governance reform, with effect from the closure of the 144th session of the Executive Board;

(2) to amend Rule 28bis of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board as set out in the Chairperson's summary and proposed way forward following the informal consultation on governance reform, with effect from the closure of the 144th session of the Executive Board;

¹ Document EB144/34.

² Document EB144/34, Annex.

- (3) to request the Director-General to elaborate a report and make recommendations to be submitted to the 145th session of the Executive Board about an informal meeting or forum to bring together Member States and non-State actors in official relations;
- (4) to recommend to the Seventy-second World Health Assembly in 2019 the adoption of the following draft decision:

The Seventy-second World Health Assembly decided:

- (1) to amend Rules 5, 11, and 12 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly as set out in the Chairperson's summary and proposed way forward¹ following the informal consultation on governance reform, in accordance with Rule 119 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly, with effect from the closure of its Seventy-second session; and to recommend that explanatory memoranda referred to in the third paragraph of Rule 5 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly, as amended, be limited to 500 words;
- (2) to amend Rule 48 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly as set out in the Chairperson's summary and proposed way forward following the informal consultation on governance reform, in accordance with Rule 119 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly, with effect from the closure of its Seventy-second session;
- (3) to amend the definitions at the beginning of the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly, Rules 3, 14, 19, 22, the heading between Rule 43 and Rule 44, and Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly as set out in the Chairperson's summary and proposed way forward following the informal consultation on governance reform, in accordance with Rule 119 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly, with effect from the closure of its Seventy-second session;
- (4) that resolutions and decisions should provide for clear reporting requirements, including reporting cycles of up to 6 years, with biennial reports, unless otherwise advised by the Director-General;
- (5) to request the Director-General:
 - (a) to provide Member States with a template for the explanatory memoranda referred to in the third paragraph of Rule 5 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly, as amended in time for consideration of proposed additional items by the Executive Board at its 146th session;
 - (b) to issue an updated edition of *Basic documents* following the closure of the Seventy-second session of the World Health Assembly in May 2019;

¹ Document EB144/34, Annex.

- (c) to submit to the Executive Board, at its 145th session in May 2019 draft guidelines for Member States to be applied before posting a written statement on the dedicated website;
- (d) to align the duration of publication on the website of written statements submitted by Member States with those submitted by non-State actors in official relations;
- (e) with respect to the methods of work of the World Health Assembly and the Executive Board, to undertake the following steps:
- (i) review and make recommendations on the establishment of end dates for reporting on resolutions and decisions that have unspecified reporting requirements;
 - (ii) review and make recommendations on consolidating and managing reporting requirements on similar subjects;
 - (iii) continue to take steps towards consolidating reports on similar subjects within existing mandates;
 - (iv) advise Member States, when submitting proposals for resolutions or decisions, on the length of the reporting cycle and on whether the proposed reporting requirements could be aligned with the reporting timelines of resolutions or decisions on related subjects;
 - (v) provide a list of global strategies and action plans, highlighting in particular the ones that will expire during the timeline of the Thirteenth General Programme of Work, 2019–2023, and outline options for their extension, as appropriate;
 - (vi) organize an informal consultation with Member States prior to the 146th session of the Executive Board (January 2020) to present the recommendations and list mentioned above;
 - (vii) submit a report to the Executive Board at its 146th session on the steps outlined above;
- (f) to update on a regular basis the forward-looking schedule of agenda items for the World Health Assembly and Executive Board, taking into account priorities set out in the general programme of work.

ANNEX

**INFORMAL CONSULTATION ON GOVERNANCE REFORM:
CHAIRPERSON’S SUMMARY AND PROPOSED WAY FORWARD**

Outcome of discussions on items “A” through “F” of the consultation document

Item A – Preparation of the agenda of the World Health Assembly by the Executive Board

1. The informal consultation discussed the following proposed amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly for the consideration of the Executive Board at its 144th session (EB144) in January 2019.

Current version	Proposed amended version
<i>Rule 5</i>	<i>Rule 5</i>
<p>The Board shall include in the provisional agenda of each regular session of the Health Assembly inter alia:</p> <p>(a) the annual report of the Director-General on the work of the Organization;</p> <p>(b) all items that the Health Assembly has, in a previous session, ordered to be included;</p> <p>(c) any items pertaining to the budget for the next financial period and to reports on the accounts for the preceding year or period;</p> <p>(d) any item proposed by a Member or by an Associate Member;</p> <p>(e) subject to such preliminary consultation as may be necessary between the Director-General and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, any item proposed by the United Nations;</p> <p>(f) any item proposed by any other organization of the United Nations system with which the Organization has entered into effective relations.</p>	<p>The Board shall include on in the provisional agenda of each regular session of the Health Assembly inter alia:</p> <p>(a) the annual report of the Director-General on the work of the Organization;</p> <p>(b) all items that the Health Assembly has, in a previous session, ordered to be included;</p> <p>(c) any items pertaining to the budget for the next financial period and to reports on the accounts for the preceding year or period;</p> <p>(d) any item proposed by a Member or by an Associate Member;</p> <p>(e) subject to such preliminary consultation as may be necessary between the Director-General and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, any item proposed by the United Nations;</p> <p>(f) any item proposed by any other organization of the United Nations system with which the Organization has entered into effective relations.</p> <p>The Board may recommend to the World Health Assembly the deferral of any item under (d), (e) and (f) above.</p> <p>Any proposal for inclusion on the provisional agenda of any item under (d), (e) and (f) above shall be accompanied by an explanatory memorandum that shall reach the Director-General no later than four weeks before the commencement of the session of the Board at which the provisional agenda of the Health Assembly is to be prepared.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Rule 11</i></p> <p>Unless the Health Assembly decides otherwise in case of urgency, proposals for new activities to be undertaken by the Organization may be placed upon the supplementary agenda of any session only if such proposals are received at least six weeks before the date of the opening of the session, or if the proposal is one which should be referred to another organ of the Organization for examination with a view to deciding whether action by the Organization is desirable.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Rule 11</i></p> <p>Unless the Health Assembly decides otherwise in case of urgency, proposals for new activities to be undertaken by the Organization may be placed upon the supplementary agenda of any session only if such proposals are received at least six weeks before the date of the opening of the session, or if the proposal is one which should be referred to another organ of the Organization for examination with a view to deciding whether action by the Organization is desirable. Any such proposal shall be accompanied by an explanatory memorandum.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Rule 12</i></p> <p>Subject to the provisions of Rule 11 regarding new activities and to the provisions of Rule 96, a supplementary item may be added to the agenda during any session, if upon the report of the General Committee the Health Assembly so decides, provided that the request for the inclusion of the supplementary item reaches the Organization within six days from the day of the opening of a regular session or within two days from the day of the opening of a special session, both periods being inclusive of the opening day.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Rule 12</i></p> <p>Subject to the provisions of Rule 11 regarding new activities and to the provisions of Rule 96, a supplementary item may be added to the agenda during any session, if upon the report of the General Committee the Health Assembly so decides, provided that the request for the inclusion of the supplementary item reaches the Organization within no later than six days from the day of prior to the opening of a regular session or no later than within two days from the day of prior to the opening of a special session, both periods being inclusive of the opening day. Any such request shall be accompanied by an explanatory memorandum.</p>

2. Given sensitivity expressed during the discussion on the preparation of the agenda of the World Health Assembly, the Secretariat has been asked to describe to EB144 the existing process for preparation and approval of the Health Assembly agenda.
3. The informal consultation recommends EB144 to recommend that the World Health Assembly adopt a decision point to the effect that explanatory memoranda should be limited to 500 words.
4. The informal consultation recommends that EB144 request that the Director-General provide Member States with a template for explanatory memoranda.

Item B – Time-limits for tabling draft resolutions and/or decisions to the Executive Board or World Health Assembly

5. The informal consultation recommends that EB144 adopt and recommend that the World Health Assembly adopt the following proposed amendments to the Rules of Procedure.

World Health Assembly	
Current version	Proposed amended version
<i>Rule 48</i>	<i>Rule 48</i>
Formal proposals relating to items of the agenda may be introduced until the first day of a regular session of the Health Assembly and no later than two days before the opening of a special session. All such proposals shall be referred to the committee to which the item of the agenda has been allocated, except if the item is considered directly in a plenary meeting.	Formal proposals relating to items of the agenda should may be introduced at least fifteen days before the opening of a regular session of the Health Assembly and may, in any event, be introduced not later than until the first day of a regular session of the Health Assembly and no later than two days before the opening of a special session. All such proposals shall be referred to the committee to which the item of the agenda has been allocated, except if the item is considered directly in a plenary meeting.
Executive Board	
Current version	Proposed amended version
<i>Rule 28 bis</i>	<i>Rule 28 bis</i>
Proposals for resolutions or decisions to be considered by the Board relating to items of the agenda may be introduced until the close of the first day of the session. However, if a session is scheduled for two days or less, such proposals may be introduced no later than 48 hours prior to the opening of the session. The Board may, if it deems it appropriate, permit the late introduction of such proposals.	Proposals for resolutions or decisions to be considered by the Board relating to items of the agenda should may be introduced at least fifteen days before the opening of the session and may, in any event, be introduced not later than until the close of the first day of the session. However, if a session is scheduled for two days or less, such proposals may be introduced no later than 48 hours prior to the opening of the session. The Board may, if it deems it appropriate, permit the late introduction of such proposals.

Item C – Alignment of the terminology used in the Rules of Procedure of the governing bodies with that used in the Framework of Engagement with Non-State Actors

6. Further to resolution WHA69.10, the informal consultation recommends that EB144 adopt and recommend that the Health Assembly adopt the following proposed amendments to the Rules of Procedure.

Executive Board	
Current version	Proposed amended version
<i>Rule 4</i>	<i>Rule 4</i>
Subject to the terms of any relevant agreement, representatives of the United Nations and of other intergovernmental organizations with which the Organization has established effective relations under Article 70 of the Constitution may participate without vote in the deliberations of meetings of the Board and its committees. Such representatives may also attend and participate without vote in the deliberations of the	Subject to the terms of any relevant agreement, representatives of the United Nations and of other intergovernmental organizations with which the Organization has established effective relations under Article 70 of the Constitution may participate without vote in the deliberations of meetings of the Board and its committees. Such representatives may also attend and participate without vote in the deliberations of the

<p>meetings of subcommittees or other subdivisions if so invited.</p> <p>Representatives of nongovernmental organizations in official relations with the Organization may participate in the deliberations of the Board as is provided for participation in the Health Assembly in the “Principles governing relations between the World Health Organization and nongovernmental organizations”.</p>	<p>meetings of subcommittees or other subdivisions if so invited.</p> <p>Representatives of nongovernmental organisations nongovernmental organizations, international business associations and philanthropic foundations in official relations with the Organization may participate in the deliberations of the Board as is provided for participation in the Health Assembly in the “Principles governing relations between the World Health Organization and nongovernmental organizations” in the Framework of Engagement with Non-State Actors</p> <p>(NB: in the process of reissuing the Basic Documents, the Secretariat may add a reference to the page of the Basic Documents which reproduces the text of FENSA).</p>
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World Health Assembly	
Current version	Proposed amended version
<p>Note: Whenever any of the following terms appear in these Rules, reference shall be as indicated below: “Constitution – to the Constitution of the World Health Organization” “Organization” – to the World Health Organization “Health Assembly” – to the World Health Assembly “Board” – to the Executive Board “Members” – to Members of the World Health Organization “Associate Members” – to Associate Members of the World Health Organization “Financial period” – to a period of two consecutive calendar years beginning with an even-numbered year.</p>	<p>Note: Whenever any of the following terms appear in these Rules, reference shall be as indicated below: “Constitution – to the Constitution of the World Health Organization” “Organization” – to the World Health Organization “Health Assembly” – to the World Health Assembly “Board” – to the Executive Board “Members” – to Members of the World Health Organization “Associate Members” – to Associate Members of the World Health Organization “Financial period” – to a period of two consecutive calendar years beginning with an even-numbered year. “Official relations” – to a privilege that the Executive Board may grant to nongovernmental organizations, international business associations and philanthropic foundations in accordance with the Framework of Engagement with Non-State Actors.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Rule 3</i></p> <p>Notices convening a regular session of the Health Assembly shall be sent by the Director-General not less than sixty days and notices convening a special session not less than thirty days before the date fixed for the opening of the session, to Members and Associate Members, to representatives of the Board and to all participating intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations admitted into relationship with the Organization invited to be represented at the session. The Director-General may invite States having made application for membership, territories</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Rule 3</i></p> <p>Notices convening a regular session of the Health Assembly shall be sent by the Director-General not less than sixty days and notices convening a special session not less than thirty days before the date fixed for the opening of the session, to Members and Associate Members, to representatives of the Board and to all participating intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations admitted into relationship organizations and nongovernmental organizations, international business associations and philanthropic foundations in official relations</p>

<p>on whose behalf application for associate membership has been made, and States which have signed but not accepted the Constitution to send observers to sessions of the Health Assembly.</p>	<p>(NB: in the process of reissuing the Basic Documents, the Secretariat may add a reference to the page of the Basic Documents which reproduces the text of FENSA) with the Organization invited to be represented at the session. The Director-General may invite States having made application for membership, territories on whose behalf application for associate membership has been made, and States which have signed but not accepted the Constitution to send observers to sessions of the Health Assembly.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Rule 14</i></p> <p>Copies of all reports and other documents relating to the provisional agenda of any session shall be made available on the Internet and sent by the Director-General to Members and Associate Members and to participating intergovernmental organizations at the same time as the provisional agenda or not less than six weeks before the commencement of a regular session of the Health Assembly; appropriate reports and documents shall also be sent to nongovernmental organizations admitted into relationship with the Organization in the same manner.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Rule 14</i></p> <p>Copies of all reports and other documents relating to the provisional agenda of any session shall be made available on the Internet and sent by the Director-General to Members and Associate Members and to participating intergovernmental organizations at the same time as the provisional agenda or not less than six weeks before the commencement of a regular session of the Health Assembly; appropriate reports and documents shall also be sent to nongovernmental organizations admitted into relationship nongovernmental organizations, international business associations and philanthropic foundations in official relations with the Organization in the same manner.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Rule 19</i></p> <p>Plenary meetings of the Health Assembly will, unless the Health Assembly decides otherwise, be open to attendance by all delegates, alternates and advisers appointed by Members, in accordance with Articles 10–12 inclusive of the Constitution, by representatives of Associate Members appointed in accordance with Article 8 of the Constitution, and the resolution governing the status of Associate Members, by representatives of the Board, by observers of invited non-Member States and territories on whose behalf application for associate membership has been made, and also by invited representatives of the United Nations and of other participating intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations admitted into relationship with the Organization.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Rule 19</i></p> <p>Plenary meetings of the Health Assembly will, unless the Health Assembly decides otherwise, be open to attendance by all delegates, alternates and advisers appointed by Members, in accordance with Articles 10–12 inclusive of the Constitution, by representatives of Associate Members appointed in accordance with Article 8 of the Constitution, and the resolution governing the status of Associate Members, by representatives of the Board, by observers of invited non-Member States and territories on whose behalf application for associate membership has been made, and also by invited representatives of the United Nations and of other participating intergovernmental organizations and nongovernmental organizations, international business associations and philanthropic foundations in official relations and non-governmental organizations admitted into relationship with the Organization.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Rule 22</i></p> <p>(already showing the amendments recommended by the 143rd session of the Executive Board for adoption by the Health Assembly at its Seventy-second session in May 2019 through decision EB143(7))</p> <p>Each Member, Associate Member and participating intergovernmental and invited non-governmental</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Rule 22</i></p> <p>Each Member, Associate Member, and participating intergovernmental organization and invited non-</p>

<p>organization shall communicate to the Director-General, if possible not less than fifteen days before the opening of the Health Assembly, the names of its representatives. In the case of delegations of Members and Associate Members, such communications shall take the form of credentials, indicating the names of its delegates, alternates and advisers, and shall be issued by the Head of State, the Head of Government, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Health or by any other appropriate authority. Such credentials may be sent electronically or hand-delivered to the Director-General.</p>	<p>governmental—organization nongovernmental organizations, international business associations and philanthropic foundations in official relations shall communicate to the Director-General, if possible not less than fifteen days before the opening of the Health Assembly, the names of its representatives. In the case of delegations of Members and Associate Members, such communications shall take the form of credentials, indicating the names of its delegates, alternates and advisers, and shall be issued by the Head of State, the Head of Government, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Health or by any other appropriate authority. Such credentials may be sent electronically or hand-delivered to the Director-General.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Heading between Rule 43 and Rule 44</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">PARTICIPATION OF REPRESENTATIVES OF ASSOCIATE MEMBERS AND OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND OF OBSERVERS OF NON-MEMBER STATES AND TERRITORIES</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Heading between Rule 43 and Rule 44</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">PARTICIPATION OF REPRESENTATIVES OF ASSOCIATE MEMBERS AND OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND NON-STATE ACTORS IN OFFICIAL RELATIONS AND OF OBSERVERS OF NON-MEMBER STATES AND TERRITORIES</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Rule 47</i></p> <p>Representatives of non-governmental organizations with which arrangements for consultation and co-operation have been made, in accordance with Article 71 of the Constitution, may be invited to attend plenary meetings and meetings of the main committees of the Health Assembly and to participate without vote therein in accordance with those arrangements, when invited to do so by the President of the Health Assembly or by the chairman of a main committee, respectively.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Rule 47</i></p> <p>Representatives of non-governmental organizations nongovernmental organizations, international business associations and philanthropic foundations in official relations with which arrangements for consultation and co-operation have been made, in accordance with Article 71 of the Constitution, may be invited to attend plenary meetings and meetings of the main committees of the Health Assembly and to participate without vote therein in accordance with the Framework of Engagement with Non-State Actors those arrangements, when invited to do so by the President of the Health Assembly or by the chairman of a main committee, respectively.</p>

7. The informal consultation recommends that EB144 request the Secretariat to issue an updated edition of the Basic documents so as to implement Health Assembly resolution WHA69.10.

Item D – Submission of written statements in lieu of/in addition to the delivery of oral interventions

8. The informal consultation recommends that EB144 request that the Secretariat take forward proposals to:

- (a) align the duration of publication on the website of written statements submitted by Member States and those submitted by non-State actors in official relations; and

- (b) submit to the Executive Board at its 145th session (May 2019) draft guidelines for Member States to be applied before posting a written statement on the dedicated website.

Item E – Participation of non-State actors in governing body meetings

9. The informal consultation recommends that EB144 consider the following measures to stimulate the participation of non-State actors in official relations in governing bodies meetings.

- (a) Non-State actors are encouraged to post their statements two weeks in advance of the meeting in order to allow Member States, if they so wish, to take them into account while formulating their own positions.
- (b) Incentives could be created for non-State actors in official relations to speak as clusters or constituencies. A limited number of speaking slots for non-State actors per session of the World Health Assembly and the Executive Board could be considered.
- (c) The Chairperson should exercise his or her discretion to ensure an effective discussion, including with respect to the time allotted for statements. Non-State actors will have timely notice of allocation of time for their interventions.
- (d) To consider continuing discussions on organizing an informal meeting with non-State actors in official relations. A concept note reflecting informal consultation's discussions will be circulated before EB144 to facilitate further discussions.

Item F – Methods of work of the World Health Assembly and the Executive Board

10. The informal consultation recommends that EB144 request the Secretariat to undertake the following steps:

- (a) review and make recommendations on the establishment of end dates for reporting on resolutions and decisions that have unspecified reporting requirements;
- (b) review and make recommendations on consolidating and managing reporting requirements on similar subjects;
- (c) continue to take steps towards consolidating reports on similar subjects within existing mandates;
- (d) provide a list of global strategies and action plans, highlighting in particular the ones that will expire during the timeline of the Thirteenth General Programme of Work, 2019–2023 (GPW 13), and outline options for their extension, as appropriate;
- (e) organize an informal consultation with Member States prior to the 146th session of the Executive Board (January 2020) to present the recommendations and list mentioned above;
- (f) submit a report to the Executive Board at its 146th session on the steps outlined above.

11. The Executive Board at its 146th session may wish to forward for the consideration of the World Health Assembly those elements of the report that are relevant to Health Assembly decisions and resolutions.
12. With respect to any new resolutions and decisions, the informal consultation recommends that the Executive Board consider the following:
 - (a) new resolutions/decisions should contain clear reporting requirements, as appropriate;
 - (b) as appropriate, a reporting cycle of up to six years, with biennial reports should be encouraged;
 - (c) in light of the circumstances, the Secretariat should advise delegations on the length of the reporting cycle and on whether the proposed reporting requirements could be aligned with the reporting timelines of resolutions or decisions on related subjects.
13. The informal consultation recommends that EB144 request that the Director-General update on a regular basis the forward-looking schedule of agenda items for the World Health Assembly and Executive Board, taking into account priorities set out in the general programme of work.

Appendix

CONCEPT NOTE – PARTICIPATION OF NON-STATE ACTORS IN GOVERNING BODY MEETINGS

The informal consultations on governance reform (Geneva, 13–14 September and 23–24 October 2018) have made good progress also in relation to the item on the “Participation of non-State actors in governing body meetings”.

The Chairperson’s summary includes the recommendations arrived at during those consultations and to be submitted to the 144th session of the Executive Board (EB144), in order to stimulate the participation of non-State actors in official relations in governing bodies meetings, as follows:

- (a) Non-State actors are encouraged to post their statements two weeks in advance of the meeting in order to allow Member States, if they so wish, to take them into account while formulating their own positions.
- (b) Incentives could be created for non-State actors in official relations to speak as clusters or constituencies. A limited number of speaking slots for non-State actors per session of the World Health Assembly and the Executive Board could be considered.
- (c) The Chairperson should exercise his or her discretion to ensure an effective discussion, including with respect to the time allotted for statements. Non-State actors will have timely notice of allocation of time for their interventions.
- (d) To consider continuing discussions on organizing an informal meeting with non-State actors in official relations. A concept note reflecting the informal consultation’s discussions will be circulated before EB144 to facilitate further discussions.

As foreseen in item (d) above, this concept note is circulated to facilitate further discussions on the possibility of organizing an informal meeting/forum for interaction between Member States and non-State actors in official relations.

Informal meeting/forum with non-State actors in official relations – main elements and perspectives

Overall, Member States welcomed the proposal of an informal meeting/forum bringing together Member States and non-State actors (nongovernmental organizations, international business associations and philanthropic foundations) in official relations.

Views converged on the appraisal that the main objective of such an informal meeting/forum would be to allow for more interactions and more meaningful dialogue with non-State actors in official relations.

The informal meeting/forum should be seen as an additional opportunity for interaction and would not replace current participation in WHO governing bodies, informal consultations and other forms of interaction.

On the other hand, a variety of views and comments were presented about possible substantive and logistic aspects of its organization, as summarized below.

Format and participation

The meeting should be as inclusive as possible to attract and allow for the broad participation of senior delegates from Member States and non-State actors, including those in official relations not permanently present in Geneva.

Formats (and best practices) applied by other international forums could be considered, such as the Social Forum of the Human Rights Council or the WTO Public Forum. Likewise, a model to be looked at is the one of interactive civil society hearings of the United Nations General Assembly, which last one day, with separate thematic panels.

The informal meeting/forum could be chaired by the Chairperson of the Executive Board.

Theme(s)

As it would be an opportunity to connect different actors, the informal meeting/forum could have either a comprehensive agenda (to attract a greater number of stakeholders) or a more focused one (to allow for deeper discussions), such as: (i) all agenda items of the World Health Assembly; (ii) clustered discussion of similar subjects; or (iii) Health Assembly general discussion theme.

Timing and Duration

Among the possibilities discussed during the informal consultations, Member States exchanged views on the following ones:

- (a) *a back-to-back meeting/forum before the Health Assembly*, allowing for the participation of non-State actors that are only able to travel once a year to Geneva (which should not increase the de facto length of the activities around the Assembly). This period of the year can be, however, loaded with events and requests of the incoming delegations from capitals. It would also represent a challenge to the Secretariat.
- (b) *an informal meeting/forum in January, during the weekend between the meeting of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee and the Executive Board session*, which would allow the participation of Member States and non-State actors who have already travelled to take part in those meetings.
- (c) *a stand-alone meeting, some weeks before the Health Assembly* (after all documents have been released) or in a calmer period of the year, such as October–November.

In all cases, inclusiveness could be further increased by the possibility of WebEx participation.

Costs

The main cost for WHO of the informal meeting/forum would be interpretation. A significant number of Member States recalled that, as multilingualism is a main value of the United Nations, interpretation to all official languages should be envisaged, which will also promote inclusiveness, by bringing together participants of different geographical regions.

A stand-alone event (not linked to the Health Assembly) would also generate cost implications for the WHO Secretariat, as well as for some Member States and non-State actors participants, who might need to cover travel expenses for this event.

Given its informal nature, the meeting/forum would not create the need for WHO to pay for travel costs of any participants.

Results

In light of the informal nature of the meeting/forum, questions were raised about whether or how its messages/discussions would be conveyed to the governing bodies.

As a possible way to reconcile the informal nature of the meeting/forum and its purpose of ensuring more meaningful dialogue, the Executive Board Chairperson could be mandated to orally present an informal summary of the discussions, together with the report from the Executive Board to the Health Assembly.

“Nothing about us without us”

During the informal consultation debates, several Member States have stressed that they are keen to hear the views and proposals of non-State actors themselves (in accordance with the principle of “Nothing about us without us”).

Conversations with non-State actors in this respect should be transparent, inclusive and efficient.

PROPOSED WAY FORWARD

Based on guidance provided by EB144, the Secretariat may be requested to elaborate a report and make recommendations about the informal meeting/forum to be submitted to the 145th session of the Executive Board (May 2019).

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