

PART I
SUMMARY RECORDS OF MEETINGS
OF COMMITTEES

GENERAL COMMITTEE

FIRST MEETING

Monday, 19 May 2008, at 12:40

Chairman: Dr L. RAMSAMMY (Guyana)
President of the Health Assembly

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Document A61/1)

The CHAIRMAN reminded the Committee that, under its terms of reference as defined in Rule 33 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly, its first task was to consider item 1.4 (Adoption of the agenda and allocation of items to the main committees) of the provisional agenda, which had been prepared by the Executive Board and issued as document A61/1. The Committee would also consider proposals for the addition of two supplementary agenda items and the programme of work of the Health Assembly.

Deletion of agenda items

The CHAIRMAN indicated that, if there was no objection, three items on the provisional agenda would be deleted, namely item 5 (Admission of new Members and Associate Members), item 14.5 (Assessment of new Members and Associate Members) and item 14.6 (Amendments to the Financial Regulations and Financial Rules).

It was so agreed.

The CHAIRMAN invited comments on the provisional agenda, as amended, on the understanding that the proposals for supplementary items would be considered later. Seeing no objections, he took it that the Committee wished to approve the provisional agenda as amended, with the exception of the two supplementary items to be considered forthwith.

It was so agreed.

2. PROPOSED SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA ITEMS (Documents A61/GC/2 and A61/GC/3)

First proposed supplementary agenda item

The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to the proposal from the Director-General, contained in document A61/GC/2, for the inclusion under agenda item 14.2 (Financial report and audited financial statements for the period 1 January 2006 – 31 December 2007) of a supplementary agenda item entitled: "Miscellaneous Income 2006–2007 and financing gap for strategic objectives 12 and 13", in accordance with Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly. There being no objection, he took it that the Committee agreed to recommend to the Health Assembly that they should include the supplementary agenda item in their agenda.

It was so agreed.

Second proposed supplementary agenda item

The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to document A61/GC/3 which contained a proposal from the governments of Belize, Burkina Faso, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Gambia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Nicaragua, Palau, Paraguay, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Solomon Islands, Swaziland and Tuvalu for the inclusion of a supplementary agenda item, "Inviting Taiwan to participate in the World Health Assembly as an observer".

He noted that for several years similar proposals had been submitted to the Committee, which had consistently recommended that they should not be included in the agenda of the Health Assembly and that the Health Assembly had always accepted that recommendation. In view of the heavy workloads of the General Committee and the Health Assembly, it was his intention to pre-empt a debate on the proposal by not giving the floor to Member States that were not members of the General Committee. He requested their understanding and cooperation in not asking for the floor and pointed out that there would be an opportunity to make statements when the plenary meeting considered the Committee's proposal. Seeing no objection, he took it that the Committee agreed not to recommend to the Health Assembly the inclusion of the supplementary agenda item in their agenda.

It was so agreed.

3. ALLOCATION OF ITEMS TO THE MAIN COMMITTEES

The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee's recommendations on agenda item 1 would be transmitted to the plenary meeting that afternoon. Agenda items 2–4 and 6–9 would also be taken up in plenary. In preparing the provisional agenda of the Health Assembly (document A61/1), the Executive Board had endeavoured to allocate agenda items to Committees A and B in accordance with their respective terms of reference. He suggested that the supplementary agenda item on "Miscellaneous Income 2006–2007 and financing gap for strategic objectives 12 and 13" should be considered by Committee B.

It was so agreed.

The CHAIRMAN, referring to the report of the Intergovernmental Working Group on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property, which Committee A would be considering under agenda item 11.6, invited the Committee to agree to its being taken up in Committee A at the earliest opportunity.

The delegate of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA asked for a clearer indication of when that was expected to be.

The CHAIRMAN said that it would be up to Committee A to decide, but that it should be at a stage in its work programme that would allow work on the report to be concluded during the Health Assembly. In the absence of further comment, he took it that the Committee agreed that the report of the Intergovernmental Working Group on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property should be considered in Committee A at the earliest opportunity.

It was so agreed.

The CHAIRMAN took it that the preliminary daily timetable was accepted.

It was so agreed.

The General Committee then drew up the programme of work for the Health Assembly until Wednesday, 21 May.

The CHAIRMAN drew attention to decision EB121(10), whereby the Executive Board decided that the Sixty-first World Health Assembly should close no later than Saturday, 24 May 2008.

He proposed that the list of speakers for the general debate on agenda item 3 would close at noon, Tuesday, 20 May 2008. In the absence of any objection, he would inform the Health Assembly of those arrangements at the following plenary meeting.

It was so agreed.

The meeting rose at 13:00.

SECOND MEETING

Wednesday, 21 May 2008, at 17:45

Chairman: Dr L. RAMSAMMY (Guyana)
President of the Health Assembly

1. PROPOSALS FOR THE ELECTION OF MEMBERS ENTITLED TO DESIGNATE A PERSON TO SERVE ON THE EXECUTIVE BOARD (Document A61/GC/4)

The CHAIRMAN reminded members that the procedure for drawing up the list of proposed names to be transmitted by the General Committee to the Health Assembly for the annual election of Members entitled to designate a person to serve on the Executive Board was governed by Article 24 of the Constitution and by Rule 102 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly. To help the General Committee in its task, three documents were before it. The first indicated the present composition of the Executive Board by region, on which list were underlined the names of the 10 Members whose term of office would expire at the end of the Sixty-first World Health Assembly and which had to be replaced. The second (document A61/GC/4) contained a list, by region, of the 10 Members that it was suggested should be entitled to designate a person to serve on the Executive Board. The third document tabulated, by region, Members of the Organization that were or had been entitled to designate persons to serve on the Executive Board. Vacancies, by region, were: Africa, 4; the Americas, 1; South-East Asia, 1; Europe, 2; the Eastern Mediterranean, 1; and the Western Pacific, 1.

As no additional suggestion was made by the General Committee, he noted that the number of candidates was the same as the number of vacant seats on the Executive Board. He therefore presumed that the General Committee wished, as was allowed under Rule 80 of the Rules of Procedure, to proceed without taking a vote since the list apparently met with its approval.

There being no objection, he concluded that it was the Committee's decision, in accordance with Rule 102 of the Rules of Procedure, to transmit a list comprising the names of the following 10 Members to the Health Assembly, for the annual election of Members entitled to designate a person to serve on the Executive Board: Bangladesh, Brazil, Hungary, Mauritania, Mauritius, Niger, Oman, Russian Federation, Samoa and Uganda.

It was so agreed.

2. ALLOCATION OF WORK TO THE MAIN COMMITTEES AND PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE HEALTH ASSEMBLY

The General Committee heard a report from Dr CICOGNA (Italy), Chairman of Committee A, on the progress of work in that committee.

The General Committee heard a report from Dr SICOTA (Angola), Chairman of Committee B, on the progress of work in that committee.

The CHAIRMAN proposed to review progress of work with the Chairmen of the committees and to revise the programme accordingly, if necessary.

It was so agreed.

The General Committee then drew up the programme of work of the Health Assembly for Thursday, 22 May, Friday, 23 May and Saturday, 24 May.

The meeting rose at 18:00.
