

Member State consultative process on governance reform

Report by the Director-General

The Director-General has the honour to transmit to the Sixty-ninth World Health Assembly the report of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Meeting on Governance Reform, which was convened in accordance with decision EB138(1) (see Annex).

ANNEX

1. The Open-ended Intergovernmental Meeting on Governance Reform, convened as decided by the Executive Board,¹ met in Geneva on 8 and 9 March 2016 and, in resumed session, on 28 and 29 April 2016 under the co-chairmanship of Ambassador Taonga Mushayavanhu of Zimbabwe and Mr Simon Cotterell of Australia.
2. The Open-ended Intergovernmental Meeting discussed, reviewed, amended and came to an agreement on the recommendations as contained in the draft decision in the Appendix to the present document. The Open-ended Intergovernmental Meeting invites the Sixty-ninth World Health Assembly to consider adopting the draft decision.
3. There was insufficient time to discuss the content of Appendix III of document EB138/6² and there was no consensus on a way forward.

¹ See decision EB138(1).

² Available at http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB138/B138_6-en.pdf (accessed 5 May 2016).

Appendix

Draft decision based on the agreed recommendations of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Meeting on Governance Reform (Geneva, 8 and 9 March 2016 and 28 and 29 April 2016)

The Sixty-ninth World Health Assembly, having considered the report of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Meeting on Governance Reform,¹ decided:

Forward looking schedule for the agenda of the Executive Board and Health Assembly

(1) to request that the Director General develop a six-year, forward-looking planning schedule of expected agenda items for the Executive Board, including its standing committees, and the Health Assembly, based on standing items, requirements established by decisions and resolutions of the governing bodies, as well those required by the Constitution, regulations and rules of the Organization – especially taking into account the General Programme of Work, and without prejudice to additional, supplementary and urgent agenda items, that might be added to the governing body agendas;

(2) to request the Director General to submit the above-mentioned forward-looking planning schedule, as an information document, to the Executive Board at its 140th session, and to update the schedule regularly, as needed;

Agenda management

(3) to request the Bureau of the Executive Board, taking into account inputs from Member States,² to review the criteria currently applied in considering items for inclusion on the provisional agenda of the Board,³ and to develop proposals for new and/or revised criteria for the consideration of the 140th session of the Executive Board;

(4) to request the Director General, in consultation with Member States and taking into account previous Member State discussions,⁴ to develop by the end of October 2016, proposals to improve the level of correspondence between the number of items on the provisional agendas of the governing bodies and the number, length and timing of their sessions including the financial implications of proposed options, for consideration by the Seventieth World Health Assembly through the 140th session of the Executive Board;

¹ Document A69/5.

² Available at <http://apps.who.int/gb/mscp/mscp.html> (accessed 9 May 2016).

³ See decision WHA65(9) (2012) and resolution EB121.R1 (2007).

⁴ See document EB136/2015/REC/2, summary records of the fourth meeting; document EB134/2014/REC/2, summary records of the fifth meeting and twelfth meeting, section 4; and document EB132/2013/REC/2, summary records of the fifth meeting and sixth meeting.

Rules of additional, supplementary and urgent agenda items

(5) to request the Director-General to prepare an analysis of the current Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board and Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly in order to identify interpretational ambiguities and gaps in the processes for the inclusion of additional, supplementary and urgent agenda items and to make recommendations on the further improvement of those processes; and to report to the Seventy-first World Health Assembly through the Executive Board;

Improvement of information technology tools for better access

(6) to request the Director-General to continue strengthening, and making more user-friendly, the use of existing and new information technology tools in order to improve timely and cost-effective access to governing body meetings and documentation, both pre- and post-session, and to continue making arrangements for access to the webcasts post-session of public governing body meetings;

Senior management coordination

(7) to recognize the Global Policy Group¹ as an advisory mechanism to the Director-General and encourage the Director-General, in accordance with the WHO Constitution, to continue to strengthen senior management coordination for the coherent implementation of decisions, policies and strategies of the Organization across all levels;

Improving transparency and accountability

(8) to request the Director-General and Regional Directors to make the delegations of authority and letters of representation publicly available on an electronic platform² in order to improve transparency and accountability;

Increasing harmonization across the regional committees in relation to the nomination of Regional Directors

(9) in accordance with decision WHA65(9), to invite each Regional Committee to consider measures to improve the process of nomination of Regional Directors, taking into consideration best practices from the six regions;

Improving transparency of the process for the selection of Assistant Directors-General

(10) to request the Director-General to improve transparency of the process for the selection of Assistant Directors-General, including through timely advertisement of the Assistant Director-General positions in all official languages;

¹ It is noted that the Global Policy Group currently comprises the Director-General, Deputy Director-General and the Regional Directors.

² For example the governance reform section of the WHO website.

Strengthening planning mechanisms

(11) to encourage the Director-General and Regional Directors working with Heads of WHO Country Offices, to strengthen the implementation of planning mechanisms¹ that improve alignment across the three levels of the Organization;

Enhancing alignment

(12) to request the Director-General, working with the Regional Directors, to assess and report on the implementation of operative paragraph 4 of decision WHA65(9) in the context of reporting on WHO reform, with the aim of enhancing alignment between the Regional Committees and the Executive Board, in relation to each subparagraph;

Strengthening oversight functions

(13) to invite Regional Committees to consider reviewing their current practices, including those of their standing committees and subcommittees, where applicable, with a view to strengthening their oversight functions; and request the Director-General, working with Regional Directors, to develop and maintain a platform² for sharing the outcome of the reviews to assist in identifying best practices in the oversight functions and to report at the appropriate time to the Executive Board;

Strengthening WHO cooperation with countries

(14) to invite the Regional Committees to improve oversight of the work of regional and country offices, including through identifying best practices and establishing a set of requirements on the reporting of regional and country office management, financial information and programme results to Regional Committees;

(15) to request the Director-General and the Regional Directors to provide the biennial WHO country presence report for review by the Regional Committees, and as an information document for the Health Assembly, through the Executive Board and its Programme, Budget and Administration Committee.

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¹ For example category networks and the results chain.

² For example, the governance reform homepage on the WHO website.