

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE THIRD MEETING

**Palais des Nations, Geneva
Thursday, 24 May 2018, scheduled at 14:30**

Chairman: Dr S. JESSAMINE (New Zealand)

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COMMITTEE B

THIRD MEETING

Thursday, 24 May 2018, at 14:40

Chairman: Dr S. JESSAMINE (New Zealand)

1. STAFFING MATTERS: Item 17 of the agenda

Human resources: annual report: Item 17.1 of the agenda (documents A71/35 and A71/44)

The CHAIRMAN drew attention to a draft resolution on reform of the global internship programme proposed by Algeria, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Ghana, Guyana, Haiti, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines and South Africa, which read:

The Seventy-first World Health Assembly,

(PP1) Having considered the human resources annual reports of 2015, 2016 and 2017;¹

(PP2) Recognizing, consistent with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and progress toward the attainment of universal health coverage, the need for effective public health leadership, resilient health systems and strong health workforce capacity;

(PP3) Guided by the Thirteenth General Programme of Work, outlining the WHO's strategic vision for the period 2019–2023, which commits to, inter alia, promoting greater access to, and equity in, the internship programme;

(PP4) Affirming the internship programme's goal to build future leaders in public health through professional training and capacity-building opportunities across headquarters, regional and country offices, and the valuable contributions interns make to the Organization;²

(PP5) Recalling Member States' concerns over the persistent imbalance in geographical participation on the internship programme, due in large part to the absence of financial support for talented future health leaders and insufficient attention paid so far to geographical diversity and gender equity among interns;

(PP6) Underscoring the commitment of all Member States towards improvements in the WHO reform process across the three levels of the Organization, including balanced geographical participation and gender equity;

(PP7) Recognizing WHO's efforts and changes to improve transparency and accessibility of the internship programme and its ambition to implement comprehensive reform,

¹ Documents A69/52, A70/45 and A71/35.

² The WHO e-Manual defines an intern is an individual who is at least 20 years old, enrolled in a university or equivalent institution leading to a formal qualification (graduate or postgraduate). Applicants who have already graduated may also qualify for consideration provided that they apply for an internship within six months after completion of their formal qualification. Interns do not have the status of WHO staff members and cannot represent the Organization in any official capacity.

OP1. DECIDES that continued improvements to the internship programme be achieved through:

- (1) the development of a sustainable and equitable internship programme based on an internship strategy and semi-structured training curriculum for interns to maximize their training experience and reinforce the learning objectives of the programme, which are, inter alia, to build a diverse pool of future leaders in public health and provide experience in the technical and administrative programmes of WHO;
- (2) the strengthening of a transparent, merit-based intern recruitment process that promotes the widest possible geographical participation and gender equity, through objective review of all intern applicants who meet the criteria;
- (3) the setting of a target that by 2022, at least 50% of accepted interns on the programme originate from least developed countries and middle-income countries with the objective of achieving balanced participation among WHO regions and gender equity;
- (4) the provision by the Secretariat of financial, as soon as possible and no later than 2020, and where applicable, in-kind assistance, including through collaboration with host countries, for all accepted interns without sufficient existing support, at a level set for the duty station, to cover reasonably incurred travel and living expenses for the duration of the internship;

OP2. URGES Member States, development partners and donors to support WHO in mobilizing the resources necessary for the financial sustainability and where applicable in-kind assistance for the internship programme, thereby ensuring talented future health leaders from all Member States can equally access the programme, irrespective of economic circumstance;

OP3. INVITES international, regional, national and local stakeholders, to engage in and support the implementation of the actions set out in this resolution;

OP4. REQUESTS the Director-General:

- (1) to take the necessary measures and, in keeping with the aims of broader human resources policy, to operationalize the objectives of this resolution, across all three levels of the Organization, drawing from the best practices of other United Nations agencies and in line with United Nations rules, regulations and relevant resolutions;
- (2) to include as part of the human resources annual report, statistics on applicants' and accepted interns' demographic data, including gender and country of origin, as well as information on progress towards the implementation of this resolution;
- (3) to submit a report to the Executive Board at its 144th session in January 2019, detailing by which mechanism financial and in-kind support to accepted interns will be provided commensurate with their needs;
- (4) to submit a stand-alone report to the Seventy-sixth World Health Assembly through the Executive Board in 2023, outlining the progress made in achieving the targets set out in this resolution and the future steps planned.

The financial and administrative implications for the Secretariat of the adoption of the draft resolution were as follows:

Resolution:	Reform of the global internship programme
A. Link to the programme budget	
1. Programme area, outcome and output(s) in the Programme budget 2018–2019 to which this draft resolution would contribute if adopted	<p>Programme area: 6.4. Management and administration</p> <p>Outcome: 6.4. Effective and efficient management and administration consistently established across the Organization</p> <p>Outputs:</p> <p>6.4.2. Effective and efficient human resources management and coordination in place</p> <p>6.4.1. Sound financial practices managed through an adequate control framework</p>
2. Short justification for considering the draft resolution, if there is no link to the results as indicated in the Programme budget 2018–2019:	Not applicable.
3. Brief description of any additional Secretariat deliverables during the biennium 2018–2019, which are not already included in the Programme budget 2018–2019:	Not applicable.
4. Estimated implementation time frame (in years or months) to achieve the resolution:	Immediate implementation in order to reach the target of 50% of accepted interns on the programme to originate from least developed countries and middle-income countries by 2022, and then maintain the level.
B. Resource implications for the Secretariat for implementation of the resolution	
1. Total resource requirements to implement the resolution, in US\$ millions:	US\$ 11.32 million.
2.a. Estimated resource requirements already planned for in the Programme budget 2018–2019, in US\$ millions:	US\$ 1.81 million.
2.b. Estimated resource requirements in addition to those already planned for in the Programme budget 2018–2019, in US\$ millions:	Zero.
3. Estimated resource requirements in the Programme budget 2020–2021, in US\$ millions:	US\$ 4.43 million.
4. Estimated resource requirements in future programme budgets, in US\$ millions:	US\$ 5.08 million.

5. Resources available to fund the implementation of the resolution in the current biennium, in US\$ millions

– **Resources available to fund the resolution in the current biennium:**

US\$ 0.57 million.

– **Remaining financing gap in the current biennium:**

US\$ 1.24 million.

– **Estimated resources, foreseen but not yet available, which would help to close the financing gap in the current biennium:**

US\$ 0.2 million and possibilities for technical units to cover stipends from their activities funds (not necessarily under Category 6).

Table. Breakdown of estimated resource requirements (in US\$ millions)

Biennium	Costs	Headquarters	Region						Total
			Africa	The Americas	South-East Asia	Europe	Eastern Mediterranean	Western Pacific	
2018–2019 resources already planned	Staff	0.375	0	NA	0	0	0	0	0.375
	Activities	1.122	0.036	NA	0.012	0.143	0.043	0.081	1.437
	Total	1.497	0.036	NA	0.012	0.143	0.043	0.081	1.812
2018–2019 additional resources	Staff	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Activities	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Total	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2020–2021 resources to be planned	Staff	0.500	0	NA	0	0	0	0	0.500
	Activities	2.855	0.124	NA	0.042	0.487	0.145	0.274	3.927
	Total	3.355	0.124	NA	0.042	0.487	0.145	0.274	4.427
Future bienniums resources to be planned	Staff	0.530	0	NA	0	0	0	0	0.530
	Activities	3.289	0.145	NA	0.049	0.574	0.171	0.323	4.551
	Total	3.819	0.145	NA	0.049	0.574	0.171	0.323	5.081

NA: not applicable.

The representative of THAILAND, speaking on behalf of the Member States of the South-East Asia Region, expressed strong support for the principles of geographical diversity, equal opportunities, gender parity, merit-based recruitment and programme effectiveness. The internship programme represented an important capacity-building platform to identify and build future global health leaders. It was therefore imperative that action be taken to rectify the underrepresentation of interns from developing countries. In order to ensure geographical diversity by 2022 and achieve the target of at least 50% of interns from developing countries, WHO must take steps to address the persisting structural limitations, including financial affordability and living costs in duty stations. That would require effective programme management and partial financial subsidy from development partners and host institutions. She urged WHO to implement the reform of the global internship programme set out in the draft resolution at the earliest opportunity and looked forward to receiving further information during the 144th session of the Executive Board regarding the mechanism by which financial and in-kind assistance would be provided to accepted interns commensurate with their needs.

The representative of JAPAN, welcoming the report, said that while there had been improvement in gender parity, more progress was needed in terms of geographical balance. Japan was

one of the countries that had been underrepresented in the global internship programme and he believed that both WHO and countries should make more effort. He therefore supported the draft resolution with the understanding that internship candidates from underrepresented countries should be favourably considered as a long-term investment in future global health leaders. In addition, he requested further information concerning its financial implications.

The representative of JAMAICA, speaking on behalf of the Core Group on WHO Internship Programme Reform, said that the provisions of the draft resolution aimed to ensure that future global health leaders from all Member States had equal opportunity to participate in the WHO internship programme. The draft resolution strengthened and extended the changes already made by the Secretariat to comprehensively reform the programme. A transparent recruitment and selection process would be introduced to ensure that qualified applicants would have a fair chance to participate, regardless of their country of origin or socioeconomic background. The draft resolution required the Secretariat to devise a strategy and curriculum that focused on educational value to ensure that the internship programme produced results and represented a good return on Member States' investment. The participation of future global health leaders must not be determined by their socioeconomic status. Accordingly, the draft resolution provided for all accepted candidates without sufficient support to receive appropriate assistance to cover their travel and living costs during the internship. The draft resolution set the target that, by 2022, at least half of the interns on the programme should come from least developed and middle-income countries. She called upon Member States to support the adoption of the draft resolution.

The representative of ECUADOR said that, in order to promote regional equity and to set an example in eliminating gaps relating to economic inequality and gender, equal opportunities must be given to all young people regardless of their socioeconomic status or country of origin. The Organization should play a role in building future global health leaders and must establish effective mechanisms to finance, at the very least, travel and living expenses. He invited other Member States to adopt the draft resolution which would contribute not only to the development of talent, but also to the promotion of inclusiveness within the Organization.

The representative of BARBADOS said that, in addition to addressing the underrepresentation of nationals from developing countries within the internship programme, the human resources report also took a progressive approach towards the recruitment of women to senior posts and recognized the importance of building an effective workforce. His country looking forward to receiving further information on the measures that would be taken to implement the objectives of the human resources strategy in the near future.

The representative of CHINA, commending WHO's progress in promoting gender parity in staffing, stressed the importance of making similar improvements in terms of geographical representation. She suggested that future human resources reports should contain an analysis of the internship programme including information on gender balance, geographical distribution and the sources of financial support and in-kind assistance made available to interns. She supported the draft resolution.

The representative of GERMANY said that WHO's highly skilled and motivated workforce represented its most valuable asset. In order to safeguard and further strengthen the Organization, appropriate attention must be paid to human resources issues and sufficient time set aside during governing body meetings to provide the relevant oversight and guidance on the matter. It would be interesting to know the average age at which staff members joined WHO and whether any shift in that figure was predicted. Increased mobility remained an issue on which the majority of staff members held specific views. It was therefore reassuring that the Secretariat had promised to take staff concerns

into account when formulating the Organization's geographical mobility policy. His country remained fully committed to the internal mobility of staff and called for greater efforts to be made in that regard. He was in favour of a well-administered, incentive-based mobility scheme that enjoyed the full support of staff. The Secretariat should take into account the experiences of other United Nations agencies in that regard. He would welcome an update on the action taken to make WHO a more respectful, family-friendly and modern workplace. An explanation of the flexible and mobile working arrangements available would also be appreciated in that respect.

The representative of MOZAMBIQUE, speaking on behalf of the Member States of the African Region, welcomed the recent innovations in WHO human resource management. The establishment of an effective human resources framework would serve as a key driver of development at the national, regional and global levels, and remained a high priority for the African Region. It was therefore vital to reverse the current trend in which 46% of staff in the professional and higher category worked at WHO headquarters. She welcomed the provisions of the draft thirteenth general programme of work that placed countries at the centre of the WHO operating model and made a wide range of technical expertise available at the country level. She appreciated the efforts made towards achieving gender balance and the new recruitment process designed to attain gender parity within the Organization. The slow progress made on the issue of geographical representation and the low representation of developing countries in the professional and higher categories was concerning. She therefore welcomed the efforts to ensure that at least one third of directors at headquarters were nationals of developing countries. She fully supported the draft resolution which committed to promoting greater access to, and equity in, the WHO global internship programme.

The representative of AUSTRALIA commended the Director-General's commitment to enhancing gender and geographical balance within the Organization. She fully endorsed the principle of a fit-for-purpose staffing structure dedicated to improving country outcomes. She welcomed the reform agenda and looked forward to seeing how it would translate into tangible progress at all levels of the Organization. The commitment to building a culture of accountability and respect lay at the heart of a high-performing organization. Her country therefore appreciated the introduction of new learning strategies and the efforts made to strengthen internal justice systems.

The representative of MEXICO welcomed the 1.6% increase in women holding long-term appointments in the professional and higher categories of the Organization. While further efforts would be required to achieve gender parity in staffing, it was important to acknowledge the progress made to date. The target calling for an annual increase of 1.5% in female staff members at the P4 level and above over the following five years would make a positive contribution towards achieving gender parity in senior positions. She welcomed the Director-General's decision to make the appointment of nationals of developing countries to senior positions a priority, as reflected in the draft thirteenth general programme of work. Her country looked forward to receiving updates at future governing body meetings regarding the progress made towards further strengthening WHO recruitment processes. The agreement between WHO and the United Nations Volunteers programme also represented an important advancement. Volunteers made a positive contribution to the workforce by using their expertise to strengthen capacity at the country level and providing surge capacity during emergencies. She further appreciated the measures adopted to promote a culture of accountability within the Organization and the training on constructive feedback provided for managers, designed to nurture staff potential and resolve workplace conflicts.

The representative of FRANCE, welcoming the Director-General's report and its references to staff mobility, asked for further information concerning the strategies adopted to increase mobility, particularly in respect of staff members returning to WHO headquarters after one or more placements in the field. In terms of combating sexual harassment, she asked the Secretariat for updated

information regarding the outcomes of the cases listed in the report of the Internal Auditor (document A71/33) and called for that information to be systematically included in the annual human resources report. She urged WHO to continue its work to achieve gender parity and balanced geographical participation, particularly in leadership roles and in regions outside Europe, as part of a clear, transparent and open recruitment process.

The representative of the UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND, welcoming the efforts under way to tackle sexual harassment and abuse, said that the Office of Compliance, Risk Management and Ethics had shown real leadership in its handling of the situation. The Office of Internal Audit and Oversight had also made great strides in addressing its backlog of investigations. Senior management should match the level of leadership and commitment shown by the two Offices and make the necessary financial, human and material resources available to support their efforts. She welcomed the Director-General's steadfast commitment to the introduction of a mandatory staff mobility policy by January 2019. However, the Organization was only as good as its people. While WHO contained some of the most gifted and dedicated staff in global health, poor performance left unchallenged weakened the confidence of Member States in, and had a detrimental effect on, the Organization's performance. Effective performance management was therefore crucial. Where necessary, WHO must be prepared to remove poor performers. One of the most vital elements of polio transition was staff management. It would be interesting to know to what extent the Director of Human Resources Management had been involved in the process of polio transition planning. Lastly, she stressed that the WHO transformation plan must take an ambitious and revitalized approach to human resources management. Her country stood ready to assist in that regard.

The representative of HAITI welcomed the commitment of the Director-General and senior management to transforming the WHO global internship programme. The Organization had pledged to increase the diversity of interns by promoting greater equity of access to young people from low- and middle-income countries in paragraph 116 of the draft thirteenth general programme of work. The draft resolution aimed to strengthen that work and build on the improvements that had already been made to the programme. His country had received encouragement and positive feedback in August 2017 after informing the Director-General of its intention to find sustainable solutions to the problems affecting the programme. He thanked the other members of the Core Group on Internship Reform and the Secretariat for their contributions to the process and encouraged Member States that had not yet done so to join the list of sponsors.

The representative of BRAZIL commended the Director-General for strengthening efforts to achieve gender equity and improve geographical representation within the Organization. The target calling for an annual increase of 1.5% in female staff members at the P4 level and above over the following five years and the goal for one third of directors at WHO headquarters to be nationals of developing countries by 2023 would make a valuable contribution to that end. Reforming the WHO global internship programme would also be crucial to promoting geographical diversity and gender equity, and building capacity in the global health sector. His country therefore wished to be added to the list of sponsors of the draft resolution. He fully supported the amendments to the 2010 policy on prevention of harassment and sexual harassment and similar initiatives to identify and address systemic and policy issues related to harassment. WHO must take a zero-tolerance approach to such behaviour at all levels.

The representative of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA commended the Organization's efforts to strike the right balance between building a flexible and agile workforce and improving performance management, limiting staff costs and promoting a culture of accountability and ethics. Further strategic action would be needed to increase the number of staff members from underrepresented and unrepresented countries. Her country fully supported WHO's geographical

mobility policy and welcomed the commitment by the Director-General to fully implement its provisions, particularly in light of the fact that only 9.3% of staff members holding long-term appointments had been geographically mobile in 2017.

The ASSISTANT DIRECTOR-GENERAL (General Management) acknowledged that the treatment of interns must be enhanced. He welcomed the draft resolution on the reform of the WHO global internship programme as a clear signal that the Organization was committed to investing in youth and building country capacity through the development of future global health leaders. Initial improvements to the internship programme had already been made, including through the introduction of a standardized recruitment process, the provision of lunch vouchers and the extension of leave and medical insurance coverage to interns. Subsequent actions would focus on achieving gender balance and geographical diversity and providing better training opportunities that were beneficial to the interns, their countries and the Organization. He noted the clear target for at least 50% of interns to originate from least developed countries and middle-income countries by 2022, which would be achieved through further financial and in-kind support to interns with insufficient resources. He expressed his commitment to improving the internship programme, including working with Member States and other partners to identify resources. An open-minded, transparent and innovative approach would be crucial to success.

The DIRECTOR (Human Resources Management), responding to the points raised, said that the Secretariat would provide regular updates on progress made in the area of human resources management in its reports and via data published on the WHO's website. Most of the information and statistics requested by Member States had been made available online. Further information regarding the implementation of the geographical mobility policy would be included in the report on human resources to be submitted to the Executive Board at its 144th session, following the conclusion of consultations between staff and management on the matter. The Secretariat would also prepare a report on WHO outreach efforts and the outcome of changes to the intern selection process. The Organization was extremely well regarded within the United Nations common system for its family-friendly policies, including in terms of maternity leave which had recently been increased by eight weeks. The Department of Human Resources Management considered the polio transition process to be a top priority and had been supporting the regional offices and the transition team at WHO headquarters in regard to future staffing needs following the global eradication of poliomyelitis.

The CHAIRMAN said that, based on his understanding of the draft thirteenth general programme of work and the mobility process, some technical functions would move from WHO headquarters to regional and country offices. He noted that the draft resolution did not specify the location where interns would work and questioned the impact on interns of the adoption and subsequent implementation of the draft thirteenth general programme of work.

The ASSISTANT DIRECTOR-GENERAL (General Management) said that the internship programme applied to the entire Organization, not just WHO headquarters.

The DIRECTOR-GENERAL, welcoming Member States' support for reforming the global internship programme, said that an intern stipend would be introduced by 2020 to promote greater equity of access to WHO internships. At present, more than 70% of current interns came from high-income countries. The interns themselves had called for greater diversity and had suggested introducing quotas per region. He hoped that Member States would heed that call and raise the resources required to bolster the effectiveness of the programme. Scholarships, which continued to be offered at the regional level but not at WHO headquarters, should also be reintroduced. Highlighting his own personal experiences as a WHO scholarship beneficiary, the Director-General said that the

scholarship programme would promote diversity and would particularly benefit students from low- and middle-income countries. Interns normally spent a maximum of six months at WHO.

Performance management should involve regular discussions based on clear expectations set out by supervisors. That approach would greatly increase accountability. Action taken as a result of unsatisfactory performance would remain a measure of last resort. Improved performance management, including behavioural change at the individual level, would be essential to ensuring a results-based organization. There was a zero-tolerance approach to harassment. Mandatory training, a whistle-blower policy and an anonymous hotline had been introduced as means of tackling and preventing such behaviour. A recent staff survey, which had recorded very high levels of participation, had provided an excellent insight into the matter. Action was now under way to identify and implement appropriate solutions.

While the draft thirteenth general programme of work had set clear targets for gender parity and geographical balance, merit would remain the first consideration. The gender parity target had been surpassed at the senior management level in the Organization. However, additional measures would be required to achieve gender parity and geographical diversity at lower staffing levels, particularly in terms of P4 and P5 posts. The effective implementation of the geographical mobility policy would require a change in mindset. As members of a global organization, staff should be assigned to locations where they could make the greatest impact. Honesty, openness and transparency would be crucial to the development and implementation of mobility guidelines. Candid discussions with the staff association would therefore continue in that vein. Field experience outside Geneva greatly enhanced the devising of effective normative guidelines. Staff mobility would therefore not negatively affect the Organization's normative function and would, in fact, play a vital role in the success of its work.

The representative of BANGLADESH thanked the Director-General for his efforts to prioritize the WHO global internship programme. He welcomed the progress made to strengthen recruitment systems and reduce the financial burden placed on interns. His country remained committed to the principles of equity, universality and merit-based recruitment and fully supported the draft resolution.

The CHAIRMAN took it that the Committee wished to approve the draft resolution.

The draft resolution was approved.¹

Report of the International Civil Service Commission: Item 17.2 of the agenda (document A71/36)

The representative of the CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC, speaking on behalf of the Member States of the African Region, welcomed the Director-General's efforts to support WHO's well-trained and dedicated workforce. Recognizing the importance of a fair and transparent system, he noted that WHO staff members should receive appropriate remuneration, and people working in dangerous and difficult areas should enjoy a status like that of United Nations peacekeepers and receive the same pay and benefits. He said that the combination of rising living costs in most African countries and pay cuts to WHO staff would result in posts in the Region becoming less attractive despite the enormous health challenges facing African countries. He therefore urged the Director-General to continue the work he was doing to foster and promote a culture of staff mobility.

The representative of THAILAND said that the effective implementation of the human resource management framework would maximize human resource capacity. Her country strongly supported

¹ Transmitted to the Health Assembly in the Committee's second report and adopted as resolution WHA71.13.

the actions to ensure equity in all aspects, especially gender equity and geographical representation. Similar efforts must also be made to prioritize vulnerable and marginalized groups.

The DIRECTOR (Human Resources Management) confirmed that the Organization followed the recommendations of the International Civil Service Commission and treated WHO staff working in the field in the same manner as United Nations field staff conducting peacekeeping missions.

The CHAIRMAN took it that the Committee wished to take note of the report contained in document A71/36.

The Committee noted the report.

Amendments to the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules: Item 17.3 of the agenda (documents A71/37 and EB142/2018/REC/1, resolutions EB142.R8 and EB142.R9)

The CHAIRMAN took it that the Committee wished to approve the draft resolutions contained in resolutions EB142.R8 and EB142.R9.

The draft resolutions were approved.¹

Appointment of representatives to the WHO Staff Pension Committee: Item 17.4 of the agenda (document A71/38)

The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the proposal to nominate Dr Assad Hafeez (Pakistan) and Dr Alan Ludowyke (Sri Lanka) as members of the WHO Staff Pension Committee for the remainder of their terms of office until May 2020.

It was so decided.²

The CHAIRMAN also drew attention to the proposal to nominate Dr Chieko Ikeda (Japan) and Dr Christoph Hauschild (Germany), as alternate members of the WHO Staff Pension Committee for a three-year term until May 2021.

It was so decided.²

2. COLLABORATION WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM AND WITH OTHER INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS: Item 19 of the agenda (document A71/43)

The representative of CHINA expressed support for WHO's strategic cooperation with partners in line with the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and its contributions to the United Nations reform process through its own transformation efforts. Recalling the United Nations Secretary-General's report of June 2017 and the provisions of the draft thirteenth general programme of work, she called on the Organization to uphold its role as the specialist health agency within the

¹ Transmitted to the Health Assembly in the Committee's second report and adopted as resolutions WHA71.11 and WHA71.12.

² Transmitted to the Health Assembly in the Committee's second report and adopted as decision WHA71(14).

United Nations system and focus on the health-related Sustainable Development Goals. Pursuant to the system-wide mapping of the functions and capacities of the United Nations development system, greater action would be required to achieve Sustainable Development Goals 5, 6, 13, 14, 15 in particular. The health-related Sustainable Development Goals and the strategic cooperation by WHO with other organizations should therefore form the basis of strategic cooperation in the future. Noting that the draft thirteenth general programme of work focused on countries and building synergies with county-level actions, she urged WHO to devise country-specific action plans and harmonize the Organization's four Member State categories with the existing United Nations categories.

The representative of MEXICO said that WHO's collaboration within the United Nations system and with other intergovernmental organizations represented an excellent opportunity to identify synergies and establish best practices in relation to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in terms of governance and administration. WHO should continue to foster dialogue and coordination with nongovernmental organizations so as to strengthen its own capacity to influence and ensure a coherent approach to the implementation of the health-related Sustainable Development Goals. She called on the Secretariat to update Member States regularly on the progress made by the different committees and regional commissions in which WHO representatives participated in order to assess the organizational and financial impact of the United Nations reform on the Organization more effectively.

The representative of NORWAY said that WHO should play an active role in United Nations reform and should closely monitor the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system and the transformation of the United Nations development system. He welcomed the Secretariat's strong commitment to actively engage in the United Nations Resident Coordinator system, pursuant to the draft thirteenth general programme of work. WHO should fully implement the provisions of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, including those relating to harmonizing procurement regulations and other administrative policies and procedures. Member States, particularly those hosting United Nations country teams, must also ensure that their policies and government ministries functioned in a coordinated and integrated way, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Flexible funding, including the introduction of additional interagency funding options, would be required meet the demands of the reform process. His country stood ready to assist in that regard.

The representative of FRANCE, speaking on behalf of Canada, France, Spain and Switzerland, expressed support for the United Nations Secretary-General's reform agenda and the repositioning of the United Nations development system. WHO and the other organizations of the United Nations system must work proactively and in good faith to implement the provisions of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system and support the adoption of the draft resolution on the reform of the United Nations development system. Welcoming the draft thirteenth general programme of work, she called on WHO to work constructively with the United Nations system to craft a solid strategic basis on which to move forward, including by identifying the comparative advantages of each entity and establishing which partners were best placed to take the lead on specific issues. Sustainable development should be taken into account at all stages of the WHO planning process through a multistakeholder and multisectoral approach. The decisions to increase WHO's contributions in accordance with the new cost sharing agreement and include a 1% levy on voluntary contributions to fund the Resident Coordinator system should also be adopted at the earliest opportunity. Her country remained firmly committed to transforming the United Nations development system and taking the necessary steps to successfully implement the Sustainable Development Goals.

The representative of FINLAND commended the Director-General's efforts to promote a more proactive approach to strategic engagement with the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations, in accordance with the 2030 Agenda. WHO must engage actively in the United Nations reform process. Additional governing body meeting time should therefore be devoted to discussing the implications of the reform for WHO and its transformation agenda, especially at the country level. The list of partnerships referred to in the report made no mention of ILO. To address the challenges of the rapidly evolving world of work and technology, WHO and ILO must cooperate closely on key areas, including the promotion of gender parity, the abolition of child labour, and the promotion of healthy, safe and secure working environments for all workers. The establishment of the Global Occupational Safety and Health Coalition by WHO, ILO and other partners represented a good example in that respect.

The representative of the REPUBLIC OF KOREA welcomed WHO's commitment to strengthening strategic engagement with organizations of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations in order to maximize the impact of joint action on health outcomes. He supported the Secretariat's proposal to build synergies between the WHO transformation agenda and United Nations system reforms and looked forward to receiving further information on the ways in which the draft thirteenth general programme of work would accommodate such work.

The representative of THAILAND said that, in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, the United Nations system must be a role model for Member States and strengthen cooperation across all sectors. The Secretariat, for its part, should integrate the Health in All Policies approach into all initiatives launched pursuant to the draft thirteenth general programme of work. Recognizing the importance of country ownership to the success of the WHO transformation, he fully supported placing countries at the centre of the reform efforts.

The representative of GHANA, speaking on behalf of Germany, Ghana and Norway, stressed the importance of building partnerships and increasing cooperation between WHO and other relevant stakeholders in order to achieve the 2030 Agenda, particularly Sustainable Development Goal 3. He therefore welcomed the Director-General's efforts to identify new pathways for closer institutional collaboration and stood ready to support the Secretariat in that process, including by formulating a joint global action plan designed to ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages.

The representative of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA welcomed the United Nations Secretary-General's reform initiative, including the goals for better collaboration and coordination between organizations in the United Nations system at the country level. Her Government would work with WHO to implement those reforms aimed at reducing administrative expenses and duplication of efforts, taking into account the need to protect flexibility, resources and impact on the ground. She noted however that there was no mention in the report of the Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction. According to the WHO website, the Special Programme remained the main instrument within the United Nations system with a global mandate to lead research in sexual and reproductive health and rights. Her Government remained a stalwart defender of, and donor to, maternal and child health, life and well-being. As such, she expressed grave concern at the structure of Special Programme, specifically the way in which it gave permanent elevated status to only one nongovernmental organization with a particular viewpoint and allowed that entity to operate on an equal footing with governments and international organizations seemingly to the exclusion of other viewpoints. With regard to the current Special Programme projects on abortion, contraception and family planning, she recalled that the International Conference on Population and Development had forged international consensus that abortion should in no case be promoted as a method of family planning. Although a strong proponent of multistakeholder

collaboration in most settings, her country was re-evaluating its support for the Special Programme in light of those concerns.

The representative of GERMANY stressed the importance of implementing the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system and supporting the adoption of the United Nations General Assembly draft resolution on the reform of the United Nations development system. WHO should engage in constructive dialogue with the United Nations Secretary-General, with a view to elaborating an appropriate implementation plan. His country remained committed to the reform of the United Nations development system and called on WHO governing bodies to engage in transparent discussions on how the Secretariat would implement the United Nations reform coherently and how the quadrennial comprehensive policy review would affect the Organization's own transformation agenda. At the country level, activities would need to be adapted to take account of the new generation of United Nations country teams, the cost savings identified through shared services and infrastructure, and the guiding role of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks.

The representative of SWITZERLAND said that WHO must be prepared to temporarily align its general programme of work with the planning cycle of other international organizations in the spirit of cooperation. She encouraged WHO to strengthen partnerships with international organizations relevant to its work, including by actively engaging in the preparations for, and discussions of, the ministerial segment of the sixty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in 2019. As noted during the sixty-first session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the global drug problem required a public health response. It was therefore important that WHO committed to implementing the recommendations of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS, in close collaboration with UNODC and INCB. Considering WHO's position as a crucial link between major global health partners and the other international organizations in the United Nations system, she urged the Organization to coordinate more closely with those stakeholders in order to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 3.

The representative of TUNISIA said that, in order to prevent duplication of efforts and avoid certain health-related areas being overlooked, WHO should increase its collaboration with other organizations of the United Nations system. The Organization should also strengthen cooperation with other partners in the health sector by promoting a new strategic approach.

The representative of the WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME welcomed the alignment of the WHO draft thirteenth general programme of work with the 2030 Agenda and the progress made in implementing the WHO Health Emergencies Programme. Her organization recognized the importance of working in partnership with WHO to respond to acute and protracted emergencies and to prepare for future health crises, including pandemics. That support was in line with WFP's commitment to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the United Nations development system reform process. WFP had supported WHO in responding to the cholera outbreak in Yemen and had recently collaborated with WHO on issues including HIV/AIDS in fragile contexts, malnutrition, and emergency response in Nepal. WFP was currently collaborating with WHO on the Ebola emergency response in the Democratic Republic of Congo and on addressing malnutrition in all its forms in order to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2 through, inter alia, the United Nations Interagency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases and the Framework for Scaling up Nutrition, hosted by WFP and the United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition. It was important that WFP and WHO built upon the success of their partnership and bolstered their coordinated efforts to improve health, food security and nutrition outcomes. She expressed great satisfaction with the progression of the relationship between the two entities and looked forward to expanding collaboration in the future.

The ASSISTANT DIRECTOR-GENERAL (External Relations), responding to points raised, said that WHO remained fully committed to the United Nations reform process and had aligned the draft thirteenth general programme of work with the Sustainable Development Goals. WHO would continue to engage as part of the United Nations country teams within the United Nations Resident Coordinator system in order to maximize the impact of joint action on health outcomes at country level. The functional reviews of the WHO Regional Office for Africa and WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean had aimed to review WHO country presence in accordance with national priorities. WHO stood ready to share its findings with the United Nations Resident Coordinator system and would take into account the United Nations reforms in its new operating model at the country level.

Regarding coordination and partnerships with other international organizations in the United Nations system, she confirmed that the Director-General had made first contact with the heads of the respective organizations and had received a letter from the United Nations Secretary-General expressing his support for interagency coordination. The financial impact on WHO of the adoption of the United Nations General Assembly draft resolution on the reform of the United Nations development system would be reviewed by the World Health Assembly and approved by the WHO governing bodies. WHO stood ready to contribute to financing the United Nations reforms but would need to obtain donors' permission for the 1% levy on tightly earmarked voluntary contributions. She recalled that WHO, as a specialized agency, required the prior approval of its own governing bodies before taking action.

Turning to the partnerships referred to in the report, she said that WHO's partnership with ILO had not been specifically mentioned due to limited space and the fact that there had been little change in its scope since the 2017 report. WHO involvement with the Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction remained ongoing. A detailed report on the activities conducted in coordination with the Special Programme would be provided at a later date. She thanked the representative of WFP for providing an excellent example of collaboration between WHO and the other organizations of the United Nations system and looked forward to further cooperation in that vein.

The CHAIRMAN took it that the Committee wished to take note of the report contained in document A71/43.

The Committee noted the report.

The meeting rose at 16:20.

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