

**FAQs REGARDING THE ELECTION PROCESS
OF THE WHO DIRECTOR-GENERAL**

I. General

1. What is new this time?

The overall process for the nomination and appointment of the Director-General has been substantially revised since 2012. Major innovations relate to:

- a. The applicability of a Code of Conduct for the Election of the Director-General throughout the process;
- b. The possibility for Member States and candidates to interact in the framework of an electronic and a live forum ahead of the Executive Board's session at which the nomination of up to three candidates will take place;
- c. The possibility for the Health Assembly to appoint the new Director-General from among up to three candidates ;
- d. The use of an electronic voting system for nomination and appointment;
- e. The reduction from five months to about five weeks of the transitional period between appointment and entry into duty of the new Director-General.

II. Proposals

1. When will the overall election process begin?

The election process will start nine months before the opening of the 140th session of the Executive Board, i.e. in April 2016. The Director-General will inform Member States, by 22 April 2016, that they may propose persons for the post of Director-General.

2. What will the *note verbale* to be sent by the Director-General in April 2016 look like?

The Director-General will send to all Member States a communication informing them that they may propose persons for the post of Director-General and will also include:

- a. The standard form for curriculum vitae;
- b. A reminder concerning the need to pledge to observe the Code of Conduct;
- c. A notice concerning the web forum;
- d. A notice concerning posting of information on candidates.

3. I wish to run for the post of Director-General. What do I have to do?

Persons wishing to run for the post of Director-General cannot directly submit their candidature. Their name should be proposed by one or more Member States along with other relevant documentation.

4. What should documentation for candidatures include?

Candidatures should include the following documents:

- a. The proposal made by a Member State;
- b. The candidate's CV and supporting information. The candidate's CV must follow the standard form set out in Annex 3 to resolution WHA66.18, not exceed 3500 words, and also be sent in electronic form. The Chairman shall verify that this limit is not exceeded.
- c. A pledge by the Member State and the candidate to observe the provisions of the Code of Conduct;
- d. A statement as to whether candidates do not wish to have their information and contact details posted on WHO website.

5. What does the 3500 words limit apply to?

The Health Assembly decided that the standard form for CV to be used by Member States proposing persons for the post of Director-General shall be limited to 3500 words and that the Chairman shall verify that this limit is not exceeded. As any additional pages are considered part of the CV, the word limit is understood to apply to the CV including any additional pages.

6. What is the deadline for submitting candidatures?

Proposals for the post of Director-General have to be sent under confidential sealed cover to the Chairman of the Board and to reach WHO headquarters no later than 22 September 2016.

7. When will the Secretariat officially announce the list of candidates?

The Secretariat will officially and publicly release the names of candidates, along with the names of the nominating countries, on 23 September 2016 – the day after the deadline for Member States to submit candidates. Until that time, there will be no official WHO list of candidates.

8. Will proposals received by the Secretariat be made available to Member States?

All proposals, curricula vitae and supporting information will be translated into all official languages, duplicated and dispatched to all Member States three months before the 140th session of the Executive Board, i.e. no later than 22 October 2016.

9. Do candidates have to be nationals of the Member State proposing their candidature?

Nothing in the Rules of Procedure or the Code of Conduct requires persons proposed for the post of Director-General to be nationals of the Member State supporting them.

10. Can a Member State propose the name of more than one person for the post of Director-General?

Both the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board and the Code of Conduct envisage the possibility of a Member State presenting more than one person.

11. Can a Member State propose the name of a WHO staff member for the post of Director-General?

WHO staff members can be proposed for the post of Director-General. The Code of Conduct envisages this possibility.

12. Do WHO staff members proposed for the post of Director-General have to abide by specific obligations?

WHO staff members proposed for the post of Director-General are subject to the obligations contained in the WHO Constitution, Staff Regulations and Rules as well as any guidance issued by the Director-General. In particular, they are required to observe the highest standard of ethical conduct, strive to avoid any appearance of impropriety and ensure a clear separation between campaign activities and service for WHO.

13. Will WHO staff members proposed for the post of Director-General continue to perform their assignment at WHO?

The Director-General informed the Board at its 138th session that she intends to request internal candidates to exhaust their annual leave entitlement, beginning on the date of the publication of the list of candidates, before placing them on special leave with half pay until the end of the 140th session of the Executive Board, in January 2017. If one or more internal candidates are nominated by the Board, the Director-General intends to place them on special leave with full pay until the 70th World Health Assembly. However, WHO staff member who are elected officials (namely, Regional Directors) would not be required to take special leave in view of their status and function.

14. What is the Code of Conduct and to whom does it apply?

The Code of Conduct was adopted by the Health Assembly in resolution WHA66.18 as a non-binding statement of appropriate practices during the electoral process. It aims at promoting an open, fair, equitable and transparent process for the election of the Director-General by setting out a number of general and specific requirements. It applies to all Member States, candidates and the Secretariat throughout the election process.

15. Should Member States proposing candidates consider disclosing grants or aid funding they have made in the last few years?

The Code of Conduct says that Member States proposing persons for the post of Director-General should consider disclosing grants and aid funding to other Member States during the previous two years in order to ensure full transparency and mutual confidence among Member States.

16. Is travel by candidates to Member States subject to any limits?

The Code of Conduct says that campaign-related travel by candidates should be limited in order to avoid excessive expenditure that could lead to inequality among Member States and candidates. Existing mechanisms (such as sessions of the Regional Committees, Executive Board and Health Assembly) should be considered for meetings and other promotional activities.

III. Period between the disclosure of candidatures and the nomination by the Board

1. Why is a medical exam required and when is it required?

After the expiry of the deadline for candidatures and pursuant to resolution EB120.R19, the Director-General shall request candidates to undergo a medical examination and to have a completed WHO medical examination form brought to the attention of the Director, WHO Health and Medical Services in order to ensure that candidates nominated have the good physical condition required of all staff members of WHO. The Director, Health and Medical Services, in turn shall report to the Chairman of the Executive Board whether the candidates appear to enjoy the good physical condition required of all staff members of WHO, and the Chairman shall inform the Board accordingly.

2. What is the difference between the web forum and the candidates' forum?

The web forum is an electronic forum for questions and answers open to all Member States and candidates wishing to participate. The candidates' forum is a live platform for candidates to make themselves and their vision known to Member States on an equal basis, open to Member States and Associate Members.

3. When and for how long will the web forum and the candidates' forum take place?

The web forum will be open on the WHO website after the Director-General has dispatched all proposals, curricula vitae and supporting information to Member States. The web forum is currently expected to last for approximately one week, and will be held ahead of the candidates' forum.

The exact date of the candidates' forum will be decided by the Board at its 139th session in May 2016. However, it should be held not later than two months in advance of the 140th session of the Board, i.e. no later than 22 November 2016. The maximum duration of the candidates' forum will be three days.

4. How will the candidates' forum be conducted?

Each candidate shall make a presentation of maximum 30 minutes, followed by questions and answers for an overall duration of 60 minutes. Member States and Associate Members will be invited to prepare questions for each candidate during the initial presentation. Both the order of the interviews and questions to be asked to each candidate shall be drawn by lot.

5. Can the public participate in the candidates' forum?

The Code of Conduct says that participation in the candidates' forum is limited to Member States and Associate Members.

6. Will candidates participating in the candidates' forum be offered travel support?

The Director-General informed the Board at its 138th session that, based on existing practice, the Secretariat will offer travel support to candidates participating in the candidates' forum in Geneva. Travel support consists of an economy class plane ticket and per diem for the time necessary for participating in the forum.

7. Will candidates be offered travel support to attend the 140th session of the Executive Board at which nomination will take place?

The Secretariat will provide travel support to the candidates that will be interviewed by the Board in accordance with the process spelled out in its Rules of Procedure.

8. Will the candidates' CVs and other information be made publicly available?

Unless otherwise explicitly stipulated in the proposal, the Secretariat will post on WHO website information on candidates, including CVs and other particulars of their qualifications and experience as received by Member States, as well as their contact information and links to individual websites, if any.

IV. Nomination by the Board and appointment by the Health Assembly

1. Can candidates attend the Executive Board's and Health Assembly's meetings at which the nomination and appointment will be conducted?

The Code of Conduct says that candidates should not attend those meetings of the Executive Board and Health Assembly at which the nomination and appointment of the Director-General is conducted, even if they form part of the delegation of a Member State. This confirms the consistent practice followed in previous elections.

2. What is the "initial screening" of candidates?

The "initial screening" is the first step that will be undertaken by the Board at its 140th session, normally on the second morning, and is aimed at eliminating those candidates not meeting the criteria approved by the Health Assembly. This stage is limited to determining whether there is consensus on one or more candidates not meeting such criteria in light of the curricula vitae and other supporting information provided by the nominating Member States.

3. How will the Board draw up a short list of candidates?

The Board decided that it will draw up a short list of five candidates through successive ballots, during which members must vote for five candidates. Ballots with more or fewer than five names will be considered as null and void. Candidates with the lowest number of votes, as well as candidates receiving less than 10% of the ballots cast will be eliminated until there are only five candidates remaining.

4. How many candidates does the Board nominate for consideration by the Health Assembly?

The Board shall nominate up to three candidates from among the candidates on the short-list for consideration by the Health Assembly. In exceptional circumstances where the nomination of three candidates is not practicable, such as where there are only one or two candidates, the Board may decide to nominate fewer than three candidates.

5. Against which criteria will candidates be assessed by the Board?

Under resolution WHA65.15 the candidates nominated by the Board should fulfil the following criteria, while underscoring the paramount importance of professional qualifications and integrity and the need to pay due regard to equitable geographical representation, as well as gender balance:

- a. A strong technical background in a health field, including experience in public health;
- b. Exposure to and extensive experience in international health;
- c. Demonstrable leadership skills and experience;
- d. Excellent communication and advocacy skills;
- e. Demonstrable competence in organizational management;
- f. Sensitivity to cultural, social and political differences;
- g. Strong commitment to the mission and objectives of WHO;
- h. Good health conditions required of all staff members of the Organization;
- i. Sufficient skill in at least one of the official working languages of the Executive Board and the Health Assembly.

6. What kind of support will the Secretariat offer to candidates nominated by the Board ?

The Director-General informed the Board at its 138th session that support will be provided to candidates nominated by the Executive Board on an equal basis, upon request, and in a transparent manner. In particular, the Secretariat will establish a "Focal Point" tasked with the function of responding or facilitating a response to any request for information that candidates nominated for the post of Director-General may wish to address to the Organization. In order to ensure equity and transparency, every response by the Secretariat will be shared with all candidates.

7. Can candidates make an oral presentation at the Health Assembly?

Following the proposal by the Director-General, the Board at its 138th session recommended to the 69th World Health Assembly to consider adopting a resolution to require nominated candidates for the post of Director-General to address the Health Assembly before the vote for appointment of the Director-General, on the understanding that statements shall be limited to 15 minutes, the order of the statements shall be decided by lot and there shall be no questions and answers after the statement.

8. Who will be entitled to vote during the Health Assembly?

Only Member States will have the right to vote during the Health Assembly. However, Member States in arrears in the payment of their contributions, whose voting rights have been suspended in accordance with Article 7 of the WHO Constitution, will be excluded from voting.

9. What is the majority required to be appointed by the Health Assembly?

The new Director-General shall be appointed by a clear and strong majority. A clear and strong majority will be considered to be a two-thirds majority or more of the Members present and voting (i.e. Members casting a valid ballot) in the first two ballots; a majority of WHO Member States or more in the third ballot; and a majority or more of the Members present and voting in subsequent ballots. A slightly different procedure will apply if the Board nominates less than three persons.

10. How will voting in the Board and the Health Assembly be conducted?

In accordance with resolution WHA67.2, the nomination and appointment of the Director-General will be conducted through a cost-effective and secure electronic voting system. Such a system was and will be tested in advance through mock votes at the 138th and 139th sessions of the Executive Board as well as at the 69th session of the Health Assembly. Members of the Board will receive ahead of the 69th session of the Health Assembly a set of instructions on how to operate the electronic voting equipment.

11. What happens if the electronic voting system breaks down?

The Secretariat will ensure that a back-up system is in place to address any difficulties or impediments that may affect the electronic voting system. Should the electronic voting system be no longer usable, the Secretariat will resort to paper ballots that have already been used in the past.

12. When will the new Director-General's term begin?

The current contract of the Director General ends on 30 June 2017. The new Director-General's term will begin immediately following the end of the current Director-General's contract.

13. How will the transitional period between the 70th session of the World Health Assembly in May 2017 and entry into duty of the new Director-General be managed?

The Secretariat will provide support to the new Director-General between his/her appointment by the Health Assembly in May 2017 and his/her entry into duty in order to facilitate, to the maximum extent possible, the transition.