143rd session of the WHO Executive Board
May 28-29, 2018

Canada’s statement

AGENDA ITEM 4.1: WHO reform

Madam, congratulations for your election as EB chairwoman.

Canada continues to support the reform agenda for WHO.

Like many, Canada would like to see a more dynamic and effective Executive Board empowered to provide high-quality strategic guidance. We welcome many of the ideas laid out in the WHO reports and the white paper to this EB but believe that more discussion is required to achieve consensus on a way forward.

The issue of the Bureau however, requires discussion as soon as possible as the next Bureau will meet in July. There are two issues for consideration:

1) the shift to in-person meetings is costly and burdensome, even for midsized countries.
2) If the EB Bureau Officers are to serve as representatives for their regions, then they require new mechanisms, such as that of the regional coordinators to seek guidance from and report out to the region.

What are the current plans for the July Bureau meeting? Are other in-person meetings foreseen?

Canada believes that the EB should strive for efficiency and effectiveness in its sessions, but the sessions should also remain as inclusive and transparent as possible. Even if it takes longer, it is to the benefit of this multilateral organisation.
Like Germany and others, we would like to discuss ways to ensure our governance bodies can better take into account NSA’s views. Like many, we also believe strategic priority matters should be afforded more discussion time.

Report 143/2, contains a number of complex proposals that we believe require more consideration and discussion among Member States. Canada welcomes the idea of creating an expert working group, as outlined in the draft decision contained in this report. We believe it would bring greater efficiency to this process.

However, Member States should maintain the role and function to make final decisions. Canada has shared constructive ideas about how to address governance reform proposals. We would be happy to share them again.

With respect to 143/3, and amending Rule 5 of the EB’s Rules of Procedure, we prefer Option (a).