

COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATION, FINANCE AND LEGAL MATTERS  
PROVISIONAL MINUTES OF THE FOURTH MEETING

Palais des Nations, Geneva  
Thursday, 14 May 1953, at 10 a.m.

CHAIRMAN: Mr. T.J. BRADY (Ireland)  
Later: Mr. L.A.D. GEERAERTS (Belgium)

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Note: Corrections to these provisional minutes should be submitted in writing to Mr. Richards, Room A.571, within 48 hours of their distribution or as soon as possible thereafter.

1. ADOPTION OF DRAFT FIRST REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE (Document A6/AFL/5)

Dr. HASHEM (Saudi Arabia), Rapporteur, presented the draft first report of the committee (document A6/AFL/5).

Sir Arcot MUDALIAR (India) requested that it should be stated in the report that a note of dissent to the resolution contained in item 4 - Assessment of China - had been submitted by the delegation of India.

The CHAIRMAN explained that it would be unusual for the opinion of an individual member to be embodied in a report of a committee, which should contain only resolutions adopted by a majority of its members, but such individual opinions would of course appear in the minutes of the committee. That view was supported by Mr. Wynne MASON (New Zealand) and Professor DONNADIEU (Costa Rica).

Upon hearing these views, and upon receiving the assurance of Mr. SIEGEL, (Assistant Director-General, Department of Administration and Finance) Secretary, that the statement which had been submitted to the Secretariat by the delegation of India would be annexed to the minutes of the second meeting of the committee, and eventually printed in the Official Records of the Sixth World Health Assembly, Sir Arcot Mudaliar did not press his request.

Decision: The draft first report of the committee as contained in document A6/AFL/5 was adopted.

2. ADOPTION OF FIRST REPORT OF THE LEGAL SUB-COMMITTEE (document A6/AFL/7 Rev 1)

Mr. RUEDI (Switzerland), Rapporteur of the Legal Sub-Committee, presented the first report of the sub-committee (document A6/AFL/7 Rev 1)

Decision: The committee approved the resolution contained in the report, relating to the Agreement concerning the privileges and immunities of the Organization and of its Regional Office for Africa, and decided to embody that resolution in a future report to be submitted to the Sixth World Health Assembly and to consider the remainder of the report when dealing with amendments to the Constitution.

3. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD ON ARREARS OF CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 1948, 1949, 1950 and 1951 AND RECOMMENDED ACTION (continued): Item 7.6.2 of the Agenda (Document A6/34 and Corr.1 and A6/AFL/9)

The CHAIRMAN read Rule 50 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly, to which reference had been made during the discussion of the item at the previous meeting of the committee. He desired to correct the impression he had given that the rule specifically applied to proceedings of committees. On re-examination, he had found that that was not the case. Nevertheless, he would submit that, if the President of the Assembly had authority to allow discussion and consideration in the plenary meeting of a resolution which had not been previously circulated in writing, the Chairman of a committee, which was less formal, had an equal right to do so. In any event, the matter had resolved itself, as decision had been adjourned until the present meeting. He believed that the misunderstanding had in no way affected the general trend of the committee's business or the subsequent decision taken regarding adjournment and closure of the debate.

The necessary document had later been circulated, but as it had only been distributed that morning he would like to know the wish of the committee as to whether the voting should take place immediately or should be postponed until the afternoon meeting.

Dr. HURTADO (Cuba) expressed the view that the committee should proceed to vote immediately and it was so agreed.

The CHAIRMAN said that the proposal of the delegation of Belgium in document A6/AFL/9 should not be called a resolution but an amendment.

The committee voted first on the resolution submitted by the delegation of Liberia, that being furthest removed from the original resolution.

### Decisions

- (1) The resolution proposed by the delegation of Liberia was rejected by 29 votes to 20, with 1 abstention.
- (2) The amendment proposed by the delegation of Belgium was adopted by 25 votes to 20, with 4 abstentions.
- (3) The resolution submitted by the delegation of Pakistan, as amended by the delegations of India and the Union of South Africa, and as further amended by the adoption of the Belgian amendment, was adopted by 30 votes to 11, with 11 abstentions.

Mr. Geeraerts (Belgium), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

4. ACCOMMODATION FOR THE HEADQUARTERS OFFICE: REPORT ON THE COST OF THE NEW BUILDINGS AND ON MEASURES TAKEN PURSUANT TO RESOLUTION WHA 5.54 Item 7.2.2 of the Agenda (Official Records No. 46, EB11.R56; Document A6/35)

Dr. van den BERG (Netherlands), Chairman of the Building Committee, wished to make two preliminary remarks before requesting the Chairman to ask the Rapporteur of the Building Committee to introduce its report. First he apologized for the fact that it had not been possible for the committee to finish its work, because of circumstances over which it had no control: secondly, he wished to express his gratitude and that of his committee for the excellent co-operation received from the European Office of the United Nations in Geneva, especially from Mr. Pelt, and for the valuable help given by the WHO Secretariat, mentioning particularly Mr. Siegel and Mr. Stencek.

The CHAIRMAN expressed his pleasure at the presence in the committee of Mr. Pelt, Director of the European Office of the United Nations, to whom he extended a warm welcome on behalf of the committee.

Mr. TOUSSAINT (France), Rapporteur of the Building Committee, presented the report of that committee, (document A6/35), which, in accordance with the wishes of the Fifth World Health Assembly, dealt with the utilization of the supplementary funds voted by that Assembly, and with the total cost of the necessary extension of the Palais des Nations undertaken by the United Nations at the expense of WHO.

Mr. Toussaint repeated the regret already expressed by the Chairman of the Building Committee that it had not been possible to submit a final report. Although the extension works had been completed for some time, several claims from the different contractors were still under discussion, as indicated in the report.

It had been found that it would not be necessary to use the whole of the additional \$129,330 voted by the Fifth World Health Assembly, but that, when all outstanding obligations had been met, the sum of approximately \$25,000 would remain. The appropriation voted by the Fifth World Health Assembly had been entirely covered by savings effected in the 1952 budget and, in accordance with the decision of that Assembly, the Director-General had been able to transfer \$25,000 from the Building Fund to the Assembly Suspense Account.

As far as could be ascertained at present, the total cost of the extension work, including interior reconstruction, would be - at most - \$1,029,278, of which approximately \$692,840 had been provided by the generous gift of the Swiss Confederation, the balance \$336,438 being a charge upon WHO.

The Building Committee was sure that, if its mandate were prolonged by the present Health Assembly, it would be possible to submit to the Executive Board at its twelfth session, and to the Seventh World Health Assembly, a final report upon the exact cost of the new building, which it was believed gave entire satisfaction to the Director-General of WHO and his staff.

The CHAIRMAN, in thanking the Rapporteur, said he was sure that all members of the committee understood the reasons why it had not been possible to prepare the final report.

The SECRETARY asked leave to make a few comments upon the report which had been presented.

Firstly, the three members constituting the Building Committee deserved considerable commendation for their painstaking work, which had made considerable demands on their time. For that reason the Director-General hoped that the committee would recommend to the Health Assembly that the Building Committee as previously constituted be re-established in order to complete its work.

Further, the committee would note that the headquarters building was complete and therefore its financing could be assumed to be complete. WHO, after a very short life, had a headquarters which was fully paid for, and that seemed to be an outstanding achievement. That had been due in part to the generous assistance of the Government of Switzerland, and also to the co-operation of the United Nations which had made it possible to make additions to the existing structure of the Palais des Nations.

The Building Committee had felt some embarrassment in submitting the

resolution set out on page 13 of its report, which, if adopted, would have the effect of re-establishing that committee with its present membership, but had agreed to its inclusion upon the insistence of the Secretariat.

The CHAIRMAN said he was sure the committee would wish to congratulate the members of the Building Committee for the excellent way in which they had carried out their task; it would be to the interests of the Organization that the same members who had shown such competence should continue to serve. Subject to any comments which delegates might wish to make, he proposed that the committee take note with satisfaction of the report and congratulate the members of the Building Committee for their excellent work, adopt the resolution contained in the report, and recommend to the Health Assembly that the same members who had so willingly agreed to carry out this important work should be entrusted with its completion, in order that a final report might be presented to the Seventh World Health Assembly.

Decision: The committee noted the report of the Building Committee and adopted the resolution proposed therein for submission to the Health Assembly.

5. REPORT ON PUBLICATIONS REVOLVING FUND: Item 7.6.6 of the Agenda (Official Records No. 46, EB11.R42, EB11.R43 and Annex 12)

Professor CANAPERIA, representative of the Executive Board, commented on resolutions EB11.R42 and EB11.R43 of the Executive Board.

The committee would recall that WHO publications had been the object of one of the principal studies undertaken by the Executive Board in the course of its ninth session. The result of those studies had been submitted to the Fifth World Health Assembly which, by its resolution WHA5.24, had requested the Executive Board to continue its studies on one of the aspects of the programme of publications, i.e., free distribution and sale. The Executive Board had accordingly examined the report of the Director-General (Official Records No. 46, Annex 12) and, in resolution EB11.R42, made certain suggestions concerning distribution and sale, at the same time approving the policy of distribution as set out in Appendix 3 of the same report.

The Executive Board had also directed its attention to the examination of the difficulties encountered in improving the sale and distribution of WHO publications. There was no doubt that WHO publications had great importance for the prestige of the Organization and for making it better known and the problem had to be considered from that standpoint, as well as from the financial aspect. It appeared that the difficulties arose particularly from the lack of any member of the Secretariat specially engaged to deal with such questions. Resolution WHA5.23 had authorized the Director-General to draw on the Publications Revolving Fund a certain sum for publicity and improvement of sales of WHO publications. On the basis of that resolution, the Executive Board had approved the proposal of the Director-General to engage a distribution and sales officer and, in the draft resolution submitted in resolution EB11.R43, it proposed to authorize the Director-General to draw on the Publications Revolving Fund an amount not to exceed \$10,000 in 1954 to be used to give publicity to WHO publications, to improve the sale of such publications, and to defray the costs of the post of distribution and sales officer.



Mr. WILLIAMS (Canada) expressed the view of his delegation that expenditure on sales promotion was only justified provided that the revenue from sales increased by an amount greater than the cost of the promotion. He asked if any information could be given or any assessment made of the improvement in sales in 1952 and whether any part of such increase could be related to the \$2,000, which he understood was the amount expended on sales promotion in that year.

Dr. HOWARD-JONES, Director, Division of Editorial and Reference Services, replied that it would be difficult at the present early stage to give any assessment of the ratio between expenditure on publicity and the increase of revenue. It was possible, however, to say that the revenue was steadily increasing.

Mr. SOLE (Union of South Africa) agreed that it would be difficult at the present stage for the Secretariat to give any indication of the results achieved by the additional appropriation, but he requested that a report should be submitted to the Seventh World Health Assembly which would take special account of the point raised by the delegate of Canada.

The SECRETARY invited the attention of the committee to paragraphs 2 and 3 of the draft resolution contained in resolution EB11.R43 which, if the resolution were adopted, would have the effect of requesting the Director-General and the Executive Board to continue to study the whole situation and of requesting the Executive Board to review the status of the Publications Revolving Fund at its first session in 1954.

As with any advertising campaign, however, the full benefits of publicity might not be realized in the first year but only after a longer period. Furthermore, the

significance of many WHO technical publications was such that it might not be unreasonable to expect the Organization to subsidize their distribution in certain parts of the world.

The serious study the whole question merited would be given to it by the Secretariat and the Executive Board with a view to presenting a report thereon to the Seventh World Health Assembly.

Decision: The draft resolution of the Executive Board contained in resolution EB11.R43 was adopted.

6. SPECIAL FUND FOR WORLD HEALTH SEALS: REPORT ON OPERATION OF THE FUND:  
Item 7.6.7 of the Agenda (Official Records No. 35, WHA4.48; 42, WHA5.50;  
Document A6/23)

Decision: The draft resolution on page 3 of document A6/23 was adopted unanimously.

7. SELECTION OF THE COUNTRY OR REGION IN WHICH THE SEVENTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY WILL BE HELD: Item 7.2.3 of the Agenda (Document A6/AFL/4)

The CHAIRMAN said that there were two points to consider under that item of the agenda. Since the Mexican proposal contained in document A6/AFL/4 concerned the Eighth World Health Assembly in 1955 he suggested that the country or region of the Seventh World Health Assembly in 1954 be decided upon first.

Dr. HAYEK (Lebanon) thought the two questions should be discussed simultaneously. He did not think it was possible to take a decision on the second question before knowing the additional financial expense involved.

The CHAIRMAN replied that discussion was open on the question of the place of the Seventh World Health Assembly, and since no suggestions were forthcoming from the committee, he assumed that it was the wish of delegates that the Health Assembly should be held at headquarters. He proposed a resolution on the following lines for transmission to the Health Assembly:

The Sixth World Health Assembly,

Having taken into account the provisions of Article 14 of the Constitution concerning the choice of the country or region in which the next Health Assembly shall be held,

DECIDES that the Seventh World Health Assembly shall be held in Switzerland.

Decision: The draft resolution, as formulated by the Chairman, was adopted unanimously.

Mr. de WERRA (Mexico), said that the proposal of his delegation (document A6/AFL/4) had been submitted at that time since it was required under resolution WHA5.48 that the invitation should be extended at least 18 months before the date of the holding of the particular session of the Health Assembly. For that reason, the Health Assembly would be obliged to consider the offer of the Mexican Government during its current session.

The CHAIRMAN said the committee could take note with satisfaction of the proposal and transmit it to the Executive Board for examination, with particular reference to the financial aspects of the question.

Sir Arcot MUDALIAR (India) said that while the offer of the Mexican Government was appreciated, it was not a practical proposition and, as such, not one that the Executive Board could study with profit, in view of the budget cut decided by the Committee on

Programme and Budget at their meeting the previous day.

The SECRETARY said that document A6/51 contained proposals resulting from decisions of the Committee on Programme and Budget the day before, including the reductions of about \$50,000 which the Director-General proposed to make in the 1954 budget. In Annex 3 of that document was a draft resolution dealing with an alternative method for the establishment of a special fund for holding Health Assemblies away from headquarters by the use of savings, if any, in the budget of 1953 and future years. That draft resolution had been prepared following the proposals in document A6/45. He suggested that it might be preferable to defer decision on the question of the place of the Eighth World Health Assembly until document A6/51 had come up for discussion under item 7.5.4 of the Agenda.

Dr. HAYEK (Lebanon) asked if the offer of the Mexican Government included any financial aid.

Dr. ZOZAYA (Mexico) thought there would be little difficulty in resolving the financial arrangements between the World Health Organization and the Mexican Government, who, as potential hosts, were ready to collaborate fully with the Organization. An expert on conference arrangements from the World Health Organization could visit Mexico to work out the costs of the Health Assembly in consultation with the Mexican authorities, who had had considerable experience of large conferences in their capital and would be able to provide approximate cost figures. It would be helpful, however, if the reply to the invitation could be given as soon as possible, as Mexico would have certain preparations to make if the invitation were accepted.

Dr. ENGLER (Panama) suggested that the Executive Board be asked to decide whether the acceptance of the invitation were compatible with the present budgetary situation of the Organization.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that, taking into consideration the statement made by the delegate of Mexico, the invitation could be noted, with satisfaction and the Director-General could be requested to confer with the Mexican Government with a view to assessing the financial and material contributions which Mexico would make. The Director-General could then report to the Executive Board on the costs to WHO of such a Health Assembly away from headquarters, after which the Executive Board would be in a position to report to the Seventh World Health Assembly. That course would not commit the Organization in any way.

Mr. CORKERY (Australia) said the method proposed by the Chairman meant, in effect, referring the matter to the Executive Board whereas the decision should be taken by the Health Assembly. Because of the difficult financial position at that time, he was in agreement with the delegate of India that the invitation should be declined. He added that it would be more costly for delegations, as well as for the Organization, to attend a Health Assembly away from headquarters. His delegation felt there was little to be gained at the present stage by planning a Health Assembly away from Geneva, and until there was need to do so they could not support any such proposal.

The SECRETARY said that under Article 14 of the Constitution the Health Assembly was called upon at each session to decide the country or region in which the next annual session should be held, the Executive Board subsequently fixing the place. In

view of that article, he felt that it would be inappropriate for the Sixth World Health Assembly to take a decision regarding the Health Assembly to be held two years later, which decision was the prerogative of the Seventh World Health Assembly in 1954. The Sixth World Health Assembly could take note of the invitation received and request that the costs involved be studied by the Director-General and the Executive Board. The question of the contribution of the Government of Mexico to the expenses involved should be studied by the Executive Board before any decision were taken by the Health Assembly. Although the Fifth World Health Assembly had adopted a resolution (WHA5.48) requiring that 50 to 75 per cent of the excess costs involved should be guaranteed either by the host country or by the host country in co-operation with the Member States of the region concerned, that resolution did not preclude the possibility of the host country paying all the extra costs if it chose to do so. For that reason he would recommend the committee to adopt the suggestion of the Chairman in order that the Board might report to the Seventh World Health Assembly on the feasibility of accepting the invitation of the Government of Mexico.

Mr. CORREA DO LAGO (Brazil) spoke in favour of the Chairman's suggestion.

Mr. WILLIAMS (Canada) agreed that in view of the statement of the Secretary it would be advisable not to take a decision on the matter until the following Health Assembly.

Mr. RUEDI (Switzerland), agreeing with the suggestion of the Chairman, asked if the Mexican Government were in a position to await the decision of the Seventh World Health Assembly. If not, the committee would be obliged to recommend refusal of the

invitation since it was obviously impossible to decide on the financial aspects immediately.

Professor DONNADIEU (Costa Rica) supported the statements made by the delegates of Brazil and of Canada.

Dr. ZOZAYA (Mexico) declared that if there were no other solution - and he appreciated the difficulties involved in the question - his Government would be willing to await the decision of the Seventh World Health Assembly.

He added that if the World Health Organization wished to adhere to the Constitution and the political implications of holding Health Assemblies in other regions of the world, it would be necessary for the Organization to evolve a more expeditious way of replying to invitations from countries, particularly in view of the resolution that such invitations should be submitted at least 18 months before the Health Assembly in question. It should not be forgotten that there was benefit to the Organization as well as to the host country from the acceptance of an invitation to hold a Health Assembly outside headquarters.

The CHAIRMAN thought that in view of the lack of information required for a decision at that time, it would be preferable to transmit the invitation to the Executive Board, requesting the Director-General to enter into negotiations with the Mexican Government with a view to making a report thereon to the Executive Board.

Dr. GURGJEVIC (Yugoslavia) said he was in agreement with the delegate of Australia with regard to the extra cost involved to delegations, particularly regarding a voyage to another hemisphere. While many countries in the New World had legations in Europe

from which personnel could be sent to conferences in Europe, the situation was not entirely comparable for European and Asian countries in the case where a Health Assembly was to be held in the Region for the Americas.

Mr. CORKERY (Australia) asked whether the suggestion of the Chairman that the matter be referred for study by the Director-General and report to the Executive Board meant that the Executive Board should make a recommendation to the Seventh World Health Assembly, or whether it would submit to the Health Assembly only the financial implications without making any recommendation on the invitation.

Dr. HAYEK (Lebanon), supporting the suggestion of the Chairman, suggested that the draft resolution include the thanks of the Health Assembly. He further proposed the closure of the discussion on the point.

Dr. SULIANTI (Indonesia) and Mr. KAHANY (Israel) spoke against the motion for closure of the discussion.

On a vote by show of hands, the motion for closure was rejected by 30 votes to 8 and 1 abstention.

Dr. SULIANTI (Indonesia) said that the preliminary study of the question of holding a Health Assembly in Mexico would involve the Organization in a certain expense with regard to the expert who would be required to go to Mexico for that purpose. The Indonesian delegation, therefore, supported the proposal of the delegate of India that a decision to refuse the invitation should be taken during the Sixth World Health Assembly.



The CHAIRMAN, replying to a question by Mr. Wynne MASON (New Zealand) said the aim of his suggestion was to submit the question to the Director-General for clarification of all points concerned, in particular the financial one, and that he should subsequently report thereon to the Executive Board.

He said that the committee would proceed to a vote on the proposal of the delegate of India, as supported by the delegate of Indonesia, and he requested the delegate of India to restate the proposal to the committee.

Sir Arcot MUDALIAR (India) proposed that the committee adopt a recommendation to the Health Assembly to the effect that while it gratefully appreciated the gesture on the part of the Government of Mexico in inviting the Organization to hold the Eighth World Health Assembly in Mexico City in 1955, it regretted very much that owing to the financial and other implications involved it was impossible to accept that invitation at that time.

Decision: The Indian draft resolution was rejected by 22 votes to 17, with 2 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN read the text of the proposal formulated by him in the light of the remarks of several other speakers:

"The Sixth World Health Assembly

NOTES with great appreciation the invitation of the Mexican

Government;

REQUESTS the Director-General to confer with the Government of Mexico on this invitation, including the financial aspect involved, and to report thereon to the Executive Board:

REQUESTS the Executive Board subsequently to report to the  
Seventh World Health Assembly."

Decision: The resolution was adopted by 32 votes to 0, with 11  
abstentions.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.