GENERAL COMMITTEE

PROVISIONAL MINUTES OF THE FIRST MEETING

Palais des Nations, Geneva
Wednesday, 8 May 1957, at 9.30 a.m.

CHAIRMAN: Dr S. AL-WAHBI (Iraq)
President of the Health Assembly

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Note: Corrections to these provisional minutes should be sent in writing to the Chief, Records Service, Room A. 571, within 48 hours of their distribution.
1. ADDITION OF SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA
   (Documents AlO/AFL/11 and AlO/10)

   It was decided to recommend that the plenary Assembly include in the agenda
   the item entitled "Amendment of Annex VII to the Convention on the privileges and
   immunities of the specialized agencies" (document AlO/AFL/11) and also the proposal
   of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics concerning the use of the Russian
   language (document AlO/10).

   It was decided to refer examination of the first-mentioned item to the
   Committee on Administration, Finance and Legal Matters.

   The CHAIRMAN requested the Assistant Director-General, Administration and
   Finance, to provide some clarification of the USSR proposal.

   Mr SIEGEL, Assistant Director-General, Administration and Finance, explained
   that if the Assembly so desired, and in conformity with Rule 13 of the Assembly
   Rules of Procedure, the Director-General would report to the Assembly on the costs
   involved in the proposal in question, as well as on the possibility of implementing
   that proposal as from the present World Health Assembly. He read Rule 116 of the
   Assembly Rules of Procedure according to which "amendments of, or additions to,
   these Rules may be adopted at any plenary meeting of the Health Assembly, provided
   that the Health Assembly has received and considered a report thereon by an
   appropriate committee", and pointed out that the competent Committee would be the
   Committee on Administration, Finance and Legal Matters.
It was decided to refer this supplementary item also to the Committee on Administration, Finance and Legal Matters, and to ask that Committee to study the matter at the beginning of its first meeting.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF MAIN COMMITTEES, INCLUDING THE PROCEDURE FOR EXAMINING THE 1958 PROGRAMME AND BUDGET ESTIMATES

It was decided to recommend to the World Health Assembly the adoption of the draft resolution contained in the Executive Board Resolution EB19.R56.

3. ALLOCATION OF AGENDA ITEMS TO THE MAIN COMMITTEES

It was decided to refer to the Committee on Programme and Budget the study of item 12 of the Provisional Agenda relating to Technical Discussions at future Health Assemblies.

Dr MOORE (Canada) expressed the view that the Committee on Administration, Finance and Legal Matters, rather than the Committee on Programme and Budget, should examine item 6.4 of the agenda (Assembly procedures for examining the programme, budget and ancillary matters), which would cover discussion of the proposal put forward by the Canadian Government.

The DIRECTOR-GENERAL explained that the Canadian Government's proposal related on the one hand to analysis of budget proposals by the Assembly and, on the other, to classification of projects by order of priority; although the first of these questions came within the competence of the Committee on Administration, Finance and Legal Matters, the second would seem to be within the field of the Committee on Programme and Budget.
Mr SAITA (Japan), Chairman of the Committee on Administration, Finance and Legal Matters, thought that the Canadian Government's proposal dealt principally with the financial aspects of the problem and that it should therefore be examined by the Committee on Administration, Finance and Legal Matters.

It was decided to refer item 6.4 to the Committee on Administration, Finance and Legal Matters.

It was also decided to recommend to the Assembly that the other items of the agenda be distributed between the Main Committees as shown in the Provisional Agenda.

4. ADOPTION OF PROCEDURE FOR TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS AT THE TENTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY (Document A10/4)

Dr METCALFE, General Chairman of the Technical Discussions, at the invitation of the Chairman of the Committee explained the arrangements made by the Director-General, in conformity with Resolution EB19.R62, for the organization of the Technical Discussions.

The General Committee decided to accept the proposed programme of work as submitted by Dr Metcalfe.

5. PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE HEALTH ASSEMBLY AND ITS MAIN COMMITTEES

It was agreed to hold a plenary meeting of the Assembly on Thursday, 9 May at 10 a.m. After a short adjournment, the Assembly would proceed at 11.30 a.m. to award the Léon Bernard Foundation Prize.

The two Main Committees would meet in the afternoon at 2.30 p.m.
Mr SIEGEL reminded the Committee that it had been decided to give urgent consideration to the Soviet Union's proposal. The General Committee would, therefore, have to meet at the conclusion of the meeting of the Committee on Administration, Finance and Legal Matters in order to transmit to the Assembly the Committee's report on the subject. It would also be advisable to waive the application of Rule 51 of the Rules of Procedure to the effect that Committee reports shall be distributed 24 hours before they are discussed by the Assembly.

Dr BURNEY (United States of America) asked whether the Soviet Delegation intended to ask for effect to be given to this proposal at the present Health Assembly.

The PRESIDENT replied in the affirmative.

Dr TOGBA (Liberia) proposed that the Soviet Union's proposal should be referred directly to the plenary Assembly.

Mr SIEGEL recalled the provisions of Rule 116 of the Rules of Procedure.

Mr SAITA (Japan) also considered that the Soviet proposal should be discussed by the Committee on Administration, Finance and Legal Matters. The Director-General would, in any case, have to make certain that he could supply the necessary services.

The DIRECTOR-GENERAL said that he would have to consider the problem of the cost of the necessary staff and the possibilities of recruiting such staff. When the information was collected, it would be communicated to the Committee on Administration, Finance and Legal Matters, which would then have the necessary data to enable it to make its recommendations.
Sir Arcot MUDALIAR (India) thought it would be difficult to make arrangements immediately for issuing in Russian the documents mentioned in Rule 83 of the Rules of Procedure.

Dr TOGBA (Liberia) agreed with Sir Arcot Mudaliar.

The DIRECTOR-GENERAL said that the Committee on Administration, Finance and Legal Matters could deal with each question separately and decide how far it would suggest giving effect to the proposal submitted by the Soviet Delegation.

It was decided that the General Committee would hold a short meeting on Thursday, 7 May, at 4 p.m. in order to transmit to the Assembly the Committee's report, and that the plenary Assembly would meet at 4.30 p.m.

6. TIMES OF MEETINGS

It was decided that the Main Committees would meet daily from 9.30 a.m. to 12 noon, and from 2.30 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. The General Committee meetings would be held at 12 noon unless otherwise notified.

The meeting rose at 10.40 a.m.