



# WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**  
**115th Session**  
**Provisional agenda item 4.1**

**EB115/4**  
**9 December 2004**

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## Revision of the International Health Regulations

### Report by the Secretariat

1. At its 113th session in January 2004, the Executive Board agreed the arrangements for convening the intergovernmental working group on revision of the International Health Regulations,<sup>1</sup> and this document provides information on the status of that revision. Also in January 2004, an interim draft of the revision<sup>2</sup> based on extensive consultations, was circulated to all Member States. Consultations based on this draft and subregional meetings were held in all six WHO regions between March and July 2004. The reports of those consultations, and written comments from 46 Member States were posted on the WHO web site together with submissions by a regional economic integration organization, an intergovernmental agency and three transport industry associations.<sup>3</sup> The interim draft was thoroughly revised on the basis of the comments received, and the draft revised International Health Regulations, accompanied by explanatory notes and a review of the relations of the proposed amendments to other international instruments,<sup>4</sup> were circulated to Member States early in October 2004.

### PROGRESS

2. The Intergovernmental Working Group on Revision of the International Health Regulations met in Geneva from 1 to 12 November 2004, with delegates from 155 Member States participating. The Group adopted its provisional agenda and elected its Officers (see Annex).

3. Three subgroups worked in parallel to consider proposed amendments broadly related to: (a) surveillance and response (b) health measures at points of entry and (c) institutional and legal issues. During the meetings of the subgroups, Member States explained their concerns, proposed changes, indicated support for various proposals and attempted to reach consensus.

4. Member States strongly supported the underlying principles guiding the revision process and considerable progress was made on the revision. A major outcome of the session was the transition from a text prepared by the Secretariat to a compilation of proposals from Member States.

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<sup>1</sup> See document EB113/2004/REC/2, summary record of the second meeting.

<sup>2</sup> Document IGWG/IHR/Working paper/12.2003.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.who.int/csr/ihr/revisionprocess/comments/en/>.

<sup>4</sup> Documents A/IHR/IGWG/3, A/IHR/IGWG/4 and A/IHR/IGWG/INF.DOC./1, respectively.

## **COMPLETION OF THE REVISION PROCESS**

5. Despite the progress made, delegates decided that more time was needed to consider some issues. Consequently, it was agreed that a further session of the Intergovernmental Working Group should be convened in Geneva from 21 to 25 February 2005, in order to reach consensus on the text as a whole. The final draft, once endorsed by the Working Group, will be submitted to the Fifty-eighth World Health Assembly for consideration.

## **ACTION BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**

6. The Board is invited to note the above report.

ANNEX

**Intergovernmental Working Group on Revision of the International Health Regulations: Officers**

**Chair**

Ireland Ms M. Whelan

**Vice-Chairs**

(The offices of Vice-Chairs were selected on the basis of country delegations, as opposed to specific individuals)

Australia  
Canada  
India  
Islamic Republic of Iran  
Romania  
South Africa

**Co-Chairs of subgroups**

<b>Subgroup A</b>	Dr N. El-Sayed (Egypt) Dr E. Pesqueira (Mexico)
<b>Subgroup B</b>	Dr C. Tshering (Bhutan) Mr A. Basse (Senegal)
<b>Subgroup C</b>	Mr Myongsei Sohn (Republic of Korea) Mr K. Wigzell (Sweden)

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