

Opening of the session and adoption of the agenda

Special procedures for the resumed session

Report by the Director-General

1. Responding to organizational difficulties caused by the pandemic of coronavirus disease (COVID-19), at its *de minimis* meeting in May 2020, the 147th session of Executive Board adopted decision EB147(9), in which it decided inter alia, “to suspend the 147th session of the Executive Board and to resume it at such date and either in Geneva or through such means as to be decided by the Executive Board or, exceptionally, by the Officers of the Executive Board in consultation with the Director-General”. Accordingly, Members of the Executive Board decided through a written silence procedure that the 147th session of the Executive Board (resumed) would be held on Monday, 16 November 2020.

2. The Executive Board further decided through a written silence procedure that the 147th session of the Executive Board (resumed) would be held using a hybrid format. However, taking into account the evolution of the COVID-19 epidemiological situation in October 2020 and the Secretariat’s expert view that, as a result, the Executive Board should rather meet through a virtual modality, and following a series of consultations with Member States on the holding of the 147th session of the Executive Board (resumed), the Executive Board recently decided through a written silence procedure that the 147th session of the Executive Board would resume virtually, using video conference technology.

3. As a consequence of the Board’s most recent decision, special procedures need to be put in place to regulate the conduct of the virtual meeting of the 147th session of the Executive Board (resumed) so that the Executive Board can pursue its work in such a virtual meeting. This report is intended to enable the Board to take a decision in that regard. The special procedures are set out in the Annex to the draft decision below.

ACTION BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

4. In view of the foregoing, the Board may wish to consider the following draft decision.

The Executive Board at its 147th session decided to adopt the special procedures set out in the Annex to this decision in order to regulate the conduct of the 147th session of the Executive Board (resumed) to be held on 16 November 2020.

ANNEX

SPECIAL PROCEDURES TO REGULATE THE CONDUCT OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE 147TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD (RESUMED)

RULES OF PROCEDURE

1. The Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board shall continue to apply in full, except to the extent that they are inconsistent with these special procedures, in which case the Executive Board's decision to adopt these special procedures shall operate as a decision to suspend the relevant Rules of Procedure to the extent necessary, in accordance with Rule 63 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board.¹

ATTENDANCE AND QUORUM FOR THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

2. Attendance by members of the Executive Board, Member States not represented on the Board and Associate Members, as well as Observers, invited representatives of the United Nations and other participating intergovernmental organizations, and non-State actors in official relations with WHO shall be through secured access to videoconference or other electronic means allowing representatives to hear other participants and to address the meeting remotely.

3. It is understood that virtual attendance of members of the Executive Board shall be taken into account when calculating the presence of a quorum.

ADDRESSING THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

4. Members of the Executive Board, Member States not represented on the Board and Associate Members, as well as Observers, invited representatives of United Nations and other participating intergovernmental organizations as well as, at the invitation of the presiding officer, non-State actors in official relations with WHO, shall be provided with the opportunity to take the floor.

5. Members of the Executive Board shall also have the opportunity, if they so wish, to submit individual pre-recorded video statements of no more than three minutes, and regional and group statements of no more than four minutes. Pre-recorded video statements should be submitted in advance of the opening of the session. The video statements so submitted shall be broadcast in lieu of a live intervention.

6. Any Member State wishing to raise a point of order or exercise a right of reply in relation to either an oral or a pre-recorded video statement made at the virtual meeting of the 147th session of the Executive Board (resumed) should signal their intention to do so. It is understood that, in accordance with well-established practice, any right of reply to either an oral or a pre-recorded video statement shall be exercised at the end of the relevant meeting.

¹ This will affect notably the relevant provisions of the following Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board as they appear in the 49th edition of Basic documents: Rule 51 (show of hands vote) and Rules 56–61 (secret ballot and elections).

REGISTRATION

7. The credentials presented for the virtual *de minimis* meeting of the 147th session of the Executive Board, held on 22 May 2020, remain valid for the resumed meeting of the Executive Board taking place on 16 November 2020.

8. Nonetheless, for the sole purpose of registration, credentials already submitted for the meeting in May 2020 must be re-submitted through the WHO online registration system for the resumed meeting in November 2020.

9. In the event that an amendment is made to the composition of a delegation, credentials submitted during registration should reflect such a change. This may take the form either of supplementary credentials or of new credentials indicating the revised composition of the full delegation.

10. Member States that did not participate at the virtual *de minimis* meeting of the 147th session of the Executive Board, held on 22 May 2020, shall submit credentials at the time of registration.

11. All credentials shall be communicated electronically to the Director-General through the WHO online registration system, if possible, no later than 12 November 2020.

SUBMISSION OF FORMAL PROPOSALS FOR THE RESUMED SESSION

12. The first day of the 147th session of the Executive Board (resumed) shall be regarded as the first day of the session for the purposes of Rule 32, by which date formal proposals relating to items of the agenda may be introduced.

DECISION-MAKING

13. All decisions of the Executive Board should be as far as possible taken by consensus. In any event, no decision shall be taken by a show of hands vote or by secret ballot.

14. In the event that a vote is required, voting shall take place by roll call conducted through the virtual system.

15. During a roll-call vote, should any delegate fail to cast a vote for any reason during the roll call, that delegate shall be called upon a second time after the conclusion of the initial roll call. Should the delegate fail to cast a vote on the second call, the delegation concerned shall be recorded as absent.

16. The procedures set out above are adopted for the purpose of the 147th session of the Executive Board (resumed) only as exceptional measures to enable the work of the Organization to continue during the extraordinary situation arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and they should not be considered as setting a precedent for future Executive Board sessions.

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