

WHO reform

Written statements: guidelines for Member States

1. Through decision EB146(17) (2020), the Executive Board decided to apply on a trial basis, from the closure of the 146th session of the Board until the closure of the 149th session of the Board, the guidelines for written statements submitted by Member States, contained in Annex 1 to document EB146/31, as amended. The guidelines, as amended, are contained in the Annex to this report. The Executive Board further decided to request the Director-General to report on the use of the guidelines to the Executive Board at its 149th session.

2. The guidelines for written statements submitted by Member States have been applied on a trial basis since the closure of the 146th session of the Board. In advance of the 149th session of the Board, the Secretariat sought Member States' feedback on the content and application of the guidelines. In general, Member States expressed support for the guidelines and their continued application and did not suggest any specific adjustments or refinements to the current text.

ACTION BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

3. The Executive Board is invited to note the report and to consider adopting a decision that the guidelines should continue to be applied to written statements relating to sessions of the Executive Board submitted by Member States. Furthermore, with a view to ensuring a consistent approach between the governing bodies, the Board may wish to consider recommending to the Health Assembly the adoption of the same decision with respect to written statements submitted by Member States in connection with Health Assembly sessions. Accordingly, the Board may wish to consider adopting the following draft decision:

The Executive Board, having considered the report on WHO reform,¹ decided:

(1) that the guidelines contained in the Annex to the report on WHO reform shall henceforth be applied to written statements relating to sessions of the Executive Board submitted by Member States;

(2) to recommend to the Seventy-fifth World Health Assembly the adoption of the following decision:

The Seventy-fifth World Health Assembly, having considered the report on WHO reform, decided that the guidelines contained in the Annex to the report on WHO reform shall henceforth be applied to written statements relating to sessions of the Health Assembly submitted by Member States.

¹ EB149/3.

ANNEX

WRITTEN STATEMENTS – GUIDELINES FOR MEMBER STATES

1. The following guidelines apply to written statements by Member States, relating to sessions of the World Health Assembly and Executive Board, to be posted on the dedicated WHO webpage.
2. Written statements are made available for information purposes. They are intended to stimulate debate and enable delegations to complement their oral interventions during the meetings of the WHO governing bodies. For example, they may expand upon the information provided by the Member State concerned during the discussion or may describe country experiences relevant to the agenda item concerned. Written statements may be submitted independently from the delivery of an oral intervention during the meeting, provided that they relate to an item on the agenda.
3. Member States may submit written statements by sending them to the following email address: statements@who.int. Statements intended for oral delivery must be submitted separately to the email address: interpret@who.int.
4. Written statements may be submitted until the closure of the relevant session of the Health Assembly or Executive Board. Such statements will remain published until the closure of the relevant body's equivalent session two years later. Statements submitted after the closure of the relevant session of the Health Assembly or Executive Board will not be accepted.
5. For readability purposes, Member States are invited to limit their statements, as well as statements submitted on behalf of a region or group of countries, to 500 words and 800 words, respectively.
6. Each statement should clearly identify:
 - (a) the Member State submitting it or, in the event of regional statements, the region or group of countries on behalf of which the statement is submitted; and
 - (b) the governing body session and specific agenda item to which the statement relates.
7. Written statements should contain text only. No photographs, diagrams, maps or other media materials may be included.
8. Written statements may be provided in any of the six WHO official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish) and will be published in the format and language of submission. Member States may provide translations of their written statements into one or more of WHO official languages, if they so wish. Such translations should be clearly marked with the words "unofficial translation".
9. Member States assume full responsibility for the content of their statements.
10. Written statements should address the agenda item in respect of which they are submitted. They must not include any offensive language, including with respect to other Member States.
11. The opportunity to post written statements on the dedicated webpage is without prejudice to the content of Member States' oral interventions during the meetings of the WHO governing bodies.

12. Written statements do not replace or supplement the official records of the relevant meetings of the WHO governing bodies and do not constitute official WHO documents. The official records of meetings of the WHO governing bodies are exclusively based on statements delivered orally during the meeting, not the content of any written statement that the delegation concerned may have also submitted. The official records constitute the exclusive authoritative record of proceedings.

13. The WHO logo will not appear on the statements but will appear on the webpage where the statements are posted.

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