



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

FIFTY-EIGHTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY
Provisional agenda item 13.1

A58/41
14 April 2005

Revision of the International Health Regulations

Report by the Secretariat

BACKGROUND

1. Resolution WHA56.28 requested the Director-General “to convene the intergovernmental working group on revision of the International Health Regulations at the appropriate time and on the agreement of the Executive Board at its 113th session in January 2004, having regard to the progress achieved on the technical work and the other commitments of the Organization.” This report provides information on the work of the Intergovernmental Working Group since the Fifty-seventh World Health Assembly in May 2004.
2. The Intergovernmental Working Group on the Revision of the International Health Regulations convened in Geneva from 1 to 12 November 2004. Delegates from 155 Member States were present to review and approve proposed amendments to the draft revision of the International Health Regulations. The working group elected its Chair (Ambassador Whelan of Ireland) and Vice-Chairs representing each of the six WHO regions. The work was divided into three subgroups which met consecutively over the course of the two weeks. Although there was much support for the underlying principles guiding the revision process and considerable progress was made, delegates found that more time was needed to consider some of the issues. The Group agreed to convene a further session from 21 to 26 February 2005 in Geneva.
3. The changes to the Regulations proposed by the Member States at the first session of the Working Group were considered by the Chair¹ and a revised text, a proposal by the Chair, was despatched to Member States in late January 2005. Consultations on the proposal were held in a number of WHO regions before the second session of the Working Group. The Officers of the Working Group met regularly during the interval between the two sessions in order to plan the schedule of work.
4. The second session of the Intergovernmental Working Group (21 to 26 February 2005) was attended by delegates from 153 Member States. Although Member States agreed on most of the text, more time was needed to reach a consensus on all the articles. It was therefore decided that the second session of the Intergovernmental Working Group would resume in Geneva from 12 to 13 May 2005, in order to complete its work.

¹ See documents A/IHR/IGWG/2/2 and A/IHR/IGWG/2/2 Corr.1.

5. It is the intention that the completed work of the second session, the Revised International Health Regulations, will be transmitted for consideration and adoption to the Fifty-eighth World Health Assembly, which convenes on 16 May 2005.

ACTION BY THE HEALTH ASSEMBLY

6. The Health Assembly is invited to note the above report.

= = =