

WHO reform processes, including the transformation agenda, and implementation of United Nations development system reform

WHO reform: governance

Report by the Director-General

1. At its 143rd session in May 2018, the Board considered the report by the Director-General on WHO reform: governance, containing an analysis of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board and Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly.¹ That analysis was aimed at identifying interpretational ambiguities and gaps in the process for the inclusion of additional, supplementary and urgent agenda items, and at addressing other ambiguities, gaps and other shortcomings in the Rules of Procedure of the governing bodies.
2. The Board then adopted a decision,² which, inter alia, recommended that the Seventy-second World Health Assembly adopt a series of amendments to its Rules of Procedure in order to:
 - (a) allow for the possibility of electronic voting for recorded votes, where appropriate systems are available;
 - (b) allow for the possibility of submitting credentials electronically;
 - (c) clarify that only delegates and alternates may be designated to vote in plenary meetings of the Health Assembly, while any member of the delegation may be designated to vote in committee meetings;
 - (d) formalize the practice of suspending a debate on a matter under consideration by making provision in the Rules of Procedure for a “motion to suspend the debate”.
3. The Board further recommended that the Health Assembly request the Director-General to renumber the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly, at an appropriate time, taking into account the amendments mentioned above.

¹ Document EB143/3.

² Decision EB143(7).

4. The proposed amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly, set out in Annex 2 to decision EB143(7), are listed in the Annex to the present report.

ACTION BY THE HEALTH ASSEMBLY

5. The Health Assembly is invited to adopt the draft decision recommended by the Executive Board in decision EB143(7):

The Seventy-second World Health Assembly decided:

- (1) to adopt the amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly, as set out in the Annex to document A72/52, in accordance with Rule 119 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly, with effect from the closure of that session of the Health Assembly;
- (2) to request the Director-General to renumber the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly, at an appropriate time, taking into account the amendments adopted through this decision.

ANNEX¹

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES OF PROCEDURE
OF THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY**

Rule number	Current version	Proposed amended version
Electronic voting for recorded votes		
72	The Health Assembly shall normally vote by show of hands, except that any delegate may request a roll-call, which shall then be taken in the English or French alphabetical order of the names of the Members, in alternate years. The name of the Member to vote first shall be determined by lot.	The Health Assembly shall normally vote by show of hands, except that any delegate may request a recorded vote roll-call, which shall then be taken in the English or French alphabetical order of the names of the Members, in alternate years. The name of the Member to vote first shall be determined by lot. Where an appropriate electronic system is available, the Health Assembly may decide to conduct any vote under this rule by electronic means.
72 bis		When the Health Assembly conducts a recorded vote without using electronic means, the vote shall be conducted by roll-call, which shall be taken in the English or French alphabetical order of the names of the Members. The name of the Member to vote first shall be determined by lot.
73	The vote of each Member participating in any roll-call shall be inserted in the record of the meeting.	The vote of each Member participating in a recorded vote any roll-call shall be inserted in the record of the meeting.
Electronic submission of credentials		
22 ^a	<p>(a) Each Member, Associate Member and participating intergovernmental and invited non-governmental organization shall communicate to the Director-General, if possible fifteen days before the date fixed for the opening of the session of the Health Assembly, the names of its representatives, including all alternates, advisers and secretaries.</p> <p>(b) The credentials of delegates of Members and of the representatives of Associate</p>	<p>(a) Each Member, Associate Member, and participating intergovernmental and invited non-governmental organization shall communicate to the Director-General, if possible not less than fifteen days before the date fixed for the opening of the session of the Health Assembly, the names of its representatives. In the case of delegations of Members and Associate Members, such communications shall take the form of credentials, indicating the names of its delegates, alternates and advisers, and, including all alternates, advisers and secretaries.</p> <p>(b) The credentials of delegates of Members and of the representatives of Associate</p>

¹ Deletions are shown with strikethrough; insertions are shown in bold.

Rule number	Current version	Proposed amended version
	Members shall be delivered to the Director-General, if possible not less than one day before the opening of the session of the Health Assembly. Such credentials shall be issued by the Head of State or by the Minister for Foreign Affairs or by the Minister of Health or by any other appropriate authority.	Members shall be delivered to the Director-General, if possible not less than one day before the opening of the session of the Health Assembly. Such credentials shall be issued by the Head of State, the Head of Government, or by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, or by the Minister of Health or by any other appropriate authority. Such credentials may be sent electronically or hand-delivered to the Director-General.
23	<p>A Committee on Credentials consisting of twelve delegates of as many Members shall be appointed at the beginning of each session by the Health Assembly on the proposal of the President. This committee shall elect its own officers. It shall examine the credentials of delegates of Members and of the representatives of Associate Members and report to the Health Assembly thereon without delay. Any delegate or representative to whose admission a Member has made objection shall be seated provisionally with the same rights as other delegates or representatives, until the Committee on Credentials has reported and the Health Assembly has given its decision. The Bureau of the Committee shall be empowered to recommend to the Health Assembly on behalf of the Committee the acceptance of the formal credentials of delegates or representatives seated on the basis of provisional credentials already accepted by the Health Assembly.</p> <p>Meetings of the Committee on Credentials shall be held in private.</p>	<p>A Committee on Credentials consisting of representatives of twelve delegates of as many Members shall be appointed at the beginning of each session by the Health Assembly on the proposal of the President. This committee shall elect its own officers. It shall examineassess whether the credentials of delegates of Members and of the representatives of Associate Members are in conformity with the requirements of the Rules of Procedure and report to the Health Assembly thereon without delay. Any delegate or representative to whose admissionPending a Member has made objectiondecision by the Health Assembly on their credentials, representatives of Members and Associate Members shall be seated provisionally with all the same rights as other delegates or representatives, until the Committee on Credentials has reported andpertaining to their participation in the Health Assembly has given its decision. The Bureau of the CommitteePresident shall be empowered to recommend to the Health Assembly on behalf of the Committee the acceptance of the formal credentials of delegates or representatives seated on the basis of provisional credentials already accepted by the Health Assembly received after the Committee on Credentials has met.</p> <p>Meetings of the Committee on Credentials shall be held in private.</p>

Rule number	Current version	Proposed amended version
Voting in plenary meetings		
19 ^a	<p>Plenary meetings of the Health Assembly will, unless the Health Assembly decides otherwise, be open to attendance by all delegates, alternates and advisers appointed by Members, in accordance with Articles 10–12 inclusive of the Constitution, by representatives of Associate Members appointed in accordance with Article 8 of the Constitution, and the resolution governing the status of Associate Members, by representatives of the Board, by observers of invited non-Member States and territories on whose behalf application for associate membership has been made, and also by invited representatives of the United Nations and of other participating intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations admitted into relationship with the Organization.</p> <p>In plenary meetings the chief delegate may designate another delegate who shall have the right to speak and vote in the name of his delegation on any question. Moreover, upon the request of the chief delegate or any delegate so designated by him the President may allow an adviser to speak on any particular point.</p>	<p>Plenary meetings of the Health Assembly will, unless the Health Assembly decides otherwise, be open to attendance by all delegates, alternates and advisers appointed by Members, in accordance with Articles 10–12 inclusive of the Constitution, by representatives of Associate Members appointed in accordance with Article 8 of the Constitution, and the resolution governing the status of Associate Members, by representatives of the Board, by observers of invited non-Member States and territories on whose behalf application for associate membership has been made, and also by invited representatives of the United Nations and of other participating intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations admitted into relationship with the Organization.</p> <p>In plenary meetings the chief delegate may designate another delegate who shall have the right to speak and vote in the name of his delegation on any question. Moreover, upon the request of the chief delegate or any delegate so designated by him the President may allow an adviser to speak on any particular point-, but the latter shall not vote in the name of his delegation on any question.</p>
Motion to suspend the debate		
59	<p>During the discussion of any matter, a delegate or a representative of an Associate Member may move the suspension or the adjournment of the meeting. Such motions shall not be debated, but shall immediately be put to a vote.</p> <p>For the purpose of these Rules “suspension of the meeting” means the temporary postponement of the business of the meeting and “adjournment of the meeting” the termination of all business until another meeting is called.</p>	<p>During the discussion of any matter, a delegate or a representative of an Associate Member may move the suspension or the adjournment of the meeting or the suspension of the debate. Such motions shall not be debated, but shall immediately be put to a vote.</p> <p>For the purpose of these Rules “suspension of the meeting” means the temporary postponement of the business of the meeting, and “adjournment of the meeting” the termination of all business until another meeting is called, and “suspension of the debate” the postponement of further discussion on the matter under discussion until later in the same session.</p>

^a Note that amendments to this Rule, relating to alignment of the terminology used in the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly with that used in the Framework of Engagement with Non-State Actors pursuant to decision EB144(3), are proposed in the draft decision contained in document A72/51.