

Closure of the Health Assembly

Written silence procedure

Report by the Director-General

1. Following a series of consultations with Member States on the holding of the Seventy-third World Health Assembly, the Executive Board agreed that the Seventy-third World Health Assembly would open on Monday, 18 May 2020 and be suspended no later than Tuesday, 19 May 2020; and that it would take place virtually, using video conference technology.

2. The present document is intended to enable the Health Assembly to take a decision in respect of the use of a written silence procedure.

ACTION BY THE HEALTH ASSEMBLY

3. In view of the foregoing, the Health Assembly may wish to consider the following draft decision.

The Seventy-third World Health Assembly, having considered the report on the closure of the Health Assembly, written silence procedure,¹ decided:

- (1) to adopt the written silence procedure set out in the Annex to this decision;
- (2) to suspend Rule 49 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly in respect of the deadline for introduction of formal proposals for the purposes of paragraph 1 of the written silence procedure.

¹ Document A73/35.

ANNEX

WRITTEN SILENCE PROCEDURE

1. Following the suspension of the Seventy-third World Health Assembly session and pending its resumption, the following written silence procedure will apply in respect of any proposal that the President of the Health Assembly determines, following informal consultations or because the proposal was recommended by the Executive Board for adoption, is suitable for adoption without further discussion by the Health Assembly.
2. At the request of the President of the Health Assembly, the Director-General will transmit to Member States any such proposal for consideration under this written silence procedure.
3. The communication will contain the text of the proposal(s) to be considered under this written silence procedure and will set a date for the receipt of any objection. Any such objection is to be conveyed in writing and addressed to the Director-General. The date for receipt of any objection will be 14 days from the date of dispatch of the communication.
4. In absence of the receipt by the set date of any written objection from a Member State, the proposal concerned will be considered as having been validly adopted by the Health Assembly. The adopted proposal will be referred to the Health Assembly at its resumed session for information only.
5. In the event of the receipt by the set date of one or more written objections from a Member State, the proposal concerned will be considered as having not been adopted by the Health Assembly. The proposal concerned will be referred to the Health Assembly for consideration at its resumed session.
6. The Director-General will communicate the outcome of the written silence procedure to all Member States as soon as possible after the set date referred to in paragraph 3. In the case of a proposal that is adopted pursuant to the written silence procedure, the date of the Director-General's communication to that effect will be date of adoption of the proposal.
7. Without prejudice to the above, any Member State may explain its position in respect of a proposal that is subject to the written silence procedure by submitting a written statement relating thereto, for posting on the WHO website. Written statements should be received by the Director-General by the date set for receipt of objections under paragraph 3. Written statements will be made available on the WHO website for information purposes only. They will appear as submitted and in the language(s) of submission. Submission of a written statement in accordance with this paragraph will not be considered as an objection for the purposes of paragraphs 3 to 5.

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