

## Working Group on Reform

### Compilation of comments by Member States

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## Comments on World Health Organization Governance Reform

### AUSTRALIA

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Australia thanks the Director-General and the Secretariat for their continued efforts in driving World Health Organization (WHO) governance reform. Australia is committed to engagement in the WHO reform process and has nominated to represent the Western Pacific Region on the Reform Working Group.

Australia acknowledges the progress made in governance reform to date, however recognises the remaining challenges in implementing long term reform, particularly those challenges that impede change at all three levels of the Organization.

As detailed in the WHO Reform Stage 2 Evaluation Report, governance reform requires more than short term efforts and a Secretariat centric approach to change. Australia considers that the Secretariat and Member States should be working as equal parties in reform and continues to support active participation from Member States in addition to the Secretariat and WHO staff, to ensure a collective responsibility in implementing reform.

Australia continues to support the principles of WHO governance as agreed at the Second Special Session of the Executive Board (EB) in November 2011 and has considered these together with, the following documents to inform our proposals and comments on WHO governance reform:

- the consolidated areas of governance reform noted in the Director General's report on WHO reform (A65/5)<sup>1</sup>;
- the recommendations of the Stage 2 Evaluation Report;
- the Joint Inspection Unit's *Review of Management, Administration and Decentralization in WHO*;
- The Independent Expert Advisory Committee's report; and
- relevant EB agenda papers and proposals put forward by the Secretariat to progress governance reform.

#### **Engagement with Non-State Actors**

While Australia recognises that further consultations on the framework for engagement of non-State actors has been facilitated through EB decision EB136(3), we wish to emphasise that a key element of WHO governance is having a robust framework which provides the Organization with sufficient flexibility to work with all global health actors, while protecting its integrity and fundamental role in setting global norms and standards. Australia welcomes the progress made in developing the framework for engagement with non-State actors and reiterates the need to implement the framework as a matter of priority.

#### **Executive Board Decision EB136**

Noting the EB's decision at its 136th session to invite Member States to submit proposals, Australia makes the following comments in relation to issues where we suggest further decisions and action should be taken:

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<sup>1</sup> Rational scheduling, alignment and harmonization of governance processes, strengthening oversight, strategic decision making by governing bodies and effective engagement with other stakeholders.

**Working methods of the governing bodies – paragraph 1(a)(i)**

Australia considers that there are two crucial areas to improve the working methods of governing bodies and support a greater strategic focus:

<b>Agenda Setting: Ensuring a manageable number of agenda items</b>	
Utilising criteria to ensure agenda items link to the Programme of Work	<p>Australia strongly supports the strict application of robust criteria for including items on governing bodies' agendas, including the submission of late agenda items, as agreed in resolution EB121.R1 and as proposed in A65/40 and agreed in decision WHA65(9). Australia considers that the necessary safeguards can be put in place for exceptional cases.</p> <p>It is also critical to ensure that Chairs and Bureaus are empowered to define a manageable agenda for meetings and select the most strategic agenda items based on the agenda setting criteria.</p>
Limiting the number of agenda items	<p>The number of agenda items discussed by the EB should be limited, in order to allow for sufficient discussion. This will, in turn, improve the effectiveness of the EB's strategic decision making. Australia supports applying a maximum optimal number of EB agenda items, including no more than 36 items in non-budget years and no more than 48 items in budget years.</p> <p>Australia proposes introducing a limit on the number of agenda on a trial basis, and evaluating this process before taking a final decision to adopt more widely.</p>
Improving communication between chairs of EB, PBAC and Regional Committees	<p>Australia supports improving the communication flows between global governance and regional committees to ensure the delineation of focus and clarity of expectations and modalities of required information flows between the committees.</p> <p>This will also support the further coordination of regional and governing body agenda setting and alignment across the Organization.</p> <p>Australia supports the Stage 2 evaluation recommendations to develop a formal process to ensure regular communication between the chairs of EB, PBAC and Regional Committees prior to and after governing body meetings.</p>
Improving communication and consultation prior to governing body meetings on how agenda will be run.	<p>Adequate consultation on proposals for the management of agenda items, resolutions and the running of government body meetings prepared by the Secretariat should take place prior to formal discussions at governing body meetings to ensure contradictory views are reconciled proactively.</p>

<b>Managing meetings and their outputs</b>	
Building capacity of governing body Chairs to effectively manage meetings	Australia encourages sustained efforts in this area. Agreeing a manageable agenda is only one factor in supporting an effective meeting. Chairs must be appropriately supported to ensure they are able to drive the agreed agenda and foster constructive debate.
Management of interventions (MS need to embrace)	<p>Australia continues to support reinforcing the role of Chairs in relation to monitoring general behaviour at governing body meetings and striving for more discipline during Member States interventions.</p> <p>Australia strongly supports focusing meetings on strategic debates to enhance the quality of deliberations.</p> <p>Unless highlighting innovative approaches or specific needs for assistance, interventions detailing country health situations should be discouraged.</p> <p>Australia acknowledges recent difficulties in reaching agreement at the EB, resulting in postponed decisions and out of session intergovernmental consultative processes. Australia supports the options identified by the Stage 2 evaluation to build consensus around difficult issues, including; stakeholder and influence mapping, proactive efforts to secure support, advocacy from key delegates at governing body meetings and the use of independent trusted voices as agent for changes (for example retired EB members).</p> <p>While Australia considers that Member States are also responsible for driving reform, it is the responsibility of the Secretariat to continue to work with and on behalf of Member States to reconcile the many views and sensitivities and present acceptable solutions.</p>
Webpage for Member State statements	Australia supports posting Member State statements in full for the duration of the governing body meeting to enable governing bodies to focus on strategic discussion.
Early discussion of draft resolutions	<p>Australia strongly supports the early discussion of draft resolutions by Member States. As a recent example, the early engagement on several resolutions proposed at EB136 ensured careful consideration of issues involved and fostered an inclusive approach to drafting text.</p> <p>Ensuring sufficient consultation occurs before discussion at the governing body meetings, will support the Member States to make timely decisions and reduce the need for further intersessional meetings.</p> <p>Governing bodies need to be cognisant of the increased burden on Geneva-based Missions and the potential for Member States</p>

	<p>without permanent representation in Geneva to feel excluded, and these factors need to be managed.</p>
<p>Improving agenda papers, in relation to timely distribution, word limits, quality, clearer actions for Member States and timely distribution</p>	<p>Australia strongly supports the timely distribution of documents to promote a more thorough and constructive understanding prior to meetings. Reducing the number of agenda items, as well as the number of intersessional meetings, will also facilitate the timely delivery of documents.</p> <p>Australia also supports the Secretariat more rigorously applying document word limits and providing clearer and more specific direction in the meeting documents on the action required as well as providing guidance needed by the governing body.</p>
<p>Side-events scheduling</p>	<p>Side events are a vital part of the WHA and have greatly enriched it as a forum for debate and exchange. However, the ability to attend all events is logistically unmanageable, even for a middle sized delegation such as Australia.</p> <p>Australia supports limiting the number of side events, for example three per region and/or no more than two per day. We would be concerned that any proposal to set a per-region limit would be impractical, as many of the most valuable side events involve co-sponsorship across regions.</p> <p>Australia could also support in-principle consideration of holding organisers responsible for the actual costs of organizing side events. It is important, however, that this approach does not become a deterrent to less developed countries initiating events.</p> <p>Australia does not support holding a one-day session in advance of the Health Assembly for side events with a broader group of stakeholders. Given the already long duration of meetings, ensuring senior representative attendance would be difficult for many delegations.</p>
<p>Reporting on progress of implementation of resolutions</p>	<p>Reporting requirements need to remain flexible and relevant to the actions endorsed. It is important that reforms in this area do not reduce the transparency and accountability of the work of the governing bodies and the Secretariat.</p> <p>Australia does not support the Secretariat's proposal in paper EB136/6 for reporting on new resolutions and decisions to be kept to a maximum of three biennial reports over a period of six years, as this is too prescriptive and implies a one-size-fits-all approach.</p> <p>Some resolutions and decisions may require the Secretariat to report back to governing bodies within one year, for example work related to immediate global health threats, while others may only require a report after two or three years, for example evaluation of strategies or plans of action.</p>

***Alignment of the governance across WHO – paragraph 1(a)(ii)***

Australia makes the following comments in relation to improving alignment of governance at all levels of WHO:

<b>Improving alignment of the governance of all three levels of WHO</b>	
Election of Regional Directors	<p>Australia strongly supports selection of Regional Directors through a competitive, merit-based process. A consistent process should be agreed and implemented across regions in order to promote fairness, accountability and transparency across the Organization.</p> <p>Australia supports the broader consideration of the resolution WPR/RC63.R7, which amended WPRO’s Rules of Procedure to include a Code of Conduct for the Nomination of the Regional Director to improve the transparency of the procedure for nominating the Regional Director.</p>
Selection and appointment of senior WHO staff, including Deputy and Assistant Director Generals and Deputy Regional Directors	<p>Australia would welcome an approach whereby the selection and appointment of these positions becomes a competitive process.</p> <p>While we consider that the Director-General and Regional Director should lead the recruitment process for these positions and have the final say in the selection, there is no reason these positions should not be the subject of competitive, merit-based, transparent processes.</p>
<p>Improving linkages between Regional Committees and EB and WHA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving the utility of Regional Committee reporting</li> <li>• Ensuring alignment between EB/WHA and Regional resolutions and decisions</li> </ul>	<p>The submission of regional progress reports to the Executive Board has laid the platform for greater transparency and increased communication between global and regional levels.</p> <p>We note, there is still a disparity in the level of detail provided across regions. Australia supports the provision of further guidance to ensure that the reports contribute to greater alignment between the regional and global governing bodies and strategic decision-making.</p> <p>Australia also supports the use of a systematic mechanism to integrate WHA global resolutions into the Regional Committee’s agenda setting to support WHA resolutions being consistently translated at regional and country level.</p>
Strengthening cross regional linkages	<p>Australia supports strengthening links and coordination mechanisms across the regions, for example, SEARO-WPRO, AFRO-EMRO, and across country offices where appropriate.</p> <p>Australia strongly supports measures to strengthen inter-regional cooperation, including in relation to communicable disease.</p>
WPRO Regional Committee governance arrangements	<p>Australia supports greater alignment of WPRO governance arrangements to increase transparency and efficiency. This would include establishing a Standing Committee, similar to that of other regional offices, to strengthen the role Member States play in Regional Committee agenda-setting and the nomination of officers for the Regional Committee, EB and WHA.</p>

# Comments on the governance reform of WHO

## China

China appreciates the Director General and the Secretariat's efforts on moving WHO governance reform forward. Nominated to represent WPRO on the Working Group, China would like to provide the following comments and recommendations on EB 136 (16) and initial contribution to the Meeting of the Working Group on Governance Reform on 26-27 March 2015 in Geneva.

### Working methods of governing bodies

#### 1) Managing the number of agenda items

- Improve and strict apply the criteria for setting agenda items of the governing bodies

The criteria for including agenda items on the governing bodies agenda including submission of urgent agenda items were established as stated in EB 121 R1, decision EB 134 (3) and in decision WHA 65(9). How to use the criteria should be detailed and agreed in order for Chair and Bureaus of EB to strictly select more strategic agenda items in manageable manner. Decision on selection and rejection of the proposed agenda items should be well documented and informed EB members to increase transparency.

The same criteria and deadlines should be used for considering submission of supplementary agenda items for WHA by General Committee of WHA while Officers of EB should be consulted.

WHA and EB Decisions on criteria:

"(...) the Officers of the Board use criteria, including those used for priority setting in the draft general programme of work, in reviewing items for inclusion on the Board's agenda"(Decision WHA65(9) )

-- Proposals that address a global public health issue, or involve a new subject within the scope of WHO, or an issue that represents a significant public health burden

-- Categories for priority setting in the draft 12th GPW: current health situation, need of individual countries, internationally agreed instruments, existence of evidence-based and cost effective interventions, comparative advantage of WHO

-- Requirement that explanatory memoranda for new proposed agenda items take into account the criteria agreed upon and identify linkages to the GPW and the programme budget (Decision EB134(3))

-- Requirement that supporting statements relating to additional items of an urgent nature take into account the criteria agreed upon, and include an explanation of the nature of the urgency as well as of the potential risks of deferral or exclusion (Decision EB134(3))

-- Requirement that explanatory memoranda for new proposed agenda items take into account the criteria agreed upon and identify linkages to the GPW and the programme budget (Decision EB134(3))

-- Requirement that supporting statements relating to additional items of an urgent nature take into account the criteria agreed upon, and include an explanation of the nature of the urgency as well as of the potential risks of deferral or exclusion (Decision EB134(3))”

- Limiting number of agenda items

China supports setting limit for number of agenda items discussed by EB to ensure sufficient time for meaningful discussion. Reasonable number of agenda items based on average number of agenda items of previous EB sessions in budget years and non-budget years could be studied and considered on trial basis first. Agreement of the limit of number of agenda items by EB would be very effective approach.

- Enforcing more specific time planning for main agenda items and progress reports

More specific time planning for each agenda items should be strictly observed. Main agenda items which require significant time for debate and which resolutions and decisions need to be agreed take at least 2-3 hours per item; However, progress reports may require less time for discussion and some of them could be also grouped for discussion. EB members should be advised (by EB Chair or briefed by the Secretariat) that progress reports are in general for information, clarification and questions, intervention should be brief if no additional important issues are noted and action required.

- No length oral statement for national situation, action and achievements

China supports establishment of webpage for statement. Long statement could be posted in the webpage for information and reviewed by EB members. EB discussion should focus on the issues and action to be taken by EB under the particular agenda item. It is advisable for EB delegations that it should be no length oral statement on national situation, action and achievements

## **2) Reform of reporting requirements**

China supports adopting a more flexible approach to reporting requirements. In general the reporting requirements could be limited to three biennial reports over a period of six years. For special cases, EB could determine extended time for reporting or specific reporting requirements

## **3) Timely distribution of documents**

- Applying more strict word limit and studying new format of documents



China supports applying more strict word limit which is an important measure for saving of time and resources. Document format should be reviewed and improved and a simpler format could be introduced with guidance for use.

- Preparing detailed briefing note for delegations

It is important that detailed briefing on agenda items of EB, RC and WHA should be provided to delegations. The briefing should include the background of agenda items, history of WHO actions, resolutions and decision made, progress, what action would be required for governing bodies etc. The briefing note should be provided to delegations in 30 days advance. Face to face briefing to delegations by WR and heads of COs is required where applicable

#### **4) Managing WHA side events**

Considering most delegations being small and middle size, in addition to ensure WHO ability to properly manage increasing number of side events, China supports introducing a limit on the number of side events to ensure full participation of delegations to main committees, plenary sessions for sufficient attention to key agenda items and resolutions/decision to be adopted /made.

### **Improving alignment of the governance of the three levels of WHO**

#### **1) Improving linkage between WHA, EB and RCs**

- A formal process of integrating WHA agenda items into Regional Committees

A formal process of integrating WHA agenda items with resolutions and decisions into Regional Committees should be introduced. In RC/WPR, a longstanding agenda item: "Coordination of World Health Assembly and Executive Board" ensures attention, coordination and necessary action by RC on global governing bodies' resolutions and decisions.

All RC agenda items that are linked with the global governing bodies' resolution and decisions should be highlighted in the RC documents, inform the RC delegations through briefing and at beginning of RC sessions; Technical contents and actions of RC agenda should be harmonized with the global governing bodies resolutions and decisions where applicable

- Improving Regional committee Report

The Regional Committee Report to EB by Chair of Regional Committees could be further improved and standardized in term of format, and length. Sufficient details are required in the Report where RC resolutions and decisions are relevant to global governing bodies resolutions and decisions

**2) Wide application of good experiences and effective measures in operation of the Organization (programmes delivery and management practice) from all the three levels of WHO**

- Staff mobility and rotation

Good experiences generated and effective measures taken in operation of the Organization (programmes delivery and management practice) from one or another Regions or HQ should be shared and exchanged globally for wide application. Suitable cases could be addressed through the governing bodies meetings. As a good example, staff mobility and rotation, which have been effectively implemented in some Region, should be more widely and seriously applied to HQ and entire Organization as its effectiveness and fairness could only be achieved by global application

- Code of Conduct for nomination of Regional Director

WPRO amended WPRO's Rules of Procedure including a Code of Conduct for the Nomination of the Regional Director to improve fairness, accountability and transparency. The Code of Conduct for Nomination of Regional Director is the very first one among UN agencies and sets a good example for election campaign and nomination of heads of UN agencies. China supports considering such Code of Conduct for nomination of candidates of all elected posts in WHO as appropriate

## **Comments by Cuba**

### **(Spanish version)**

1. Cuba favorece un proceso de perfeccionamiento de la OMS, que conduzca a una mayor efectividad en el cumplimiento de su mandato, en particular en la respuesta ante brotes epidémicos que puedan comprometer la seguridad sanitaria a niveles nacionales, regionales o globales.
2. En relación con el análisis de los métodos de trabajo de los órganos deliberantes, incluido el aumento del número de puntos, resoluciones y decisiones y su repercusión en la gobernanza, Cuba favorece un criterio de racionalidad y efectividad en la presentación de proyectos, que contribuyan a evitar la duplicación y extensión innecesaria de los mismos. No obstante, esto no debe limitar el derecho de los Estados Miembros a presentar temas en la agenda, resoluciones o decisiones,
3. En relación con el funcionamiento de la Mesa del Consejo Ejecutivo y la Mesa de la Asamblea Mundial de la Salud, Cuba considera que los mismos no deben sobrepasar sus atribuciones organizativas ni tomar decisiones que le competen a la membresía de los referidos órganos.

### **(English version)**

1. Cuba favors a process of improvement in the WHO, which leads to greater effectiveness in the compliance of its mandate, particularly in responding to outbreaks that may compromise the sanitary safety at a national, regional and global level.
2. As to the analysis of the working methods of the governing bodies, including the increase in the number of points, resolutions and decisions and their impact on governance, Cuba favors a criterion of rationality and effectiveness when presenting projects, that helps to avoid their unnecessary duplication and extensions. However, this should not limit the right of Member States to submit issues on the agenda, resolutions or decisions.
3. Regarding the operation of the Officers of the Executive Board and the General Committee of the World Health Assembly, Cuba considers that these should not exceed their organizational duties or make decisions that are incumbent upon the membership of the above.

Best regards,

Belkis Romeu, PhD  
Health Attaché  
Permanent Mission of Cuba  
Geneva

## **Comments by Finland**

Finland considers the improvement of the working methods of governing bodies to be an integral part of the reform process. Progress has been made towards a governing body agenda that covers the full programme budget. Regarding progress reports, we would like to restate our view that they need to contain information about the resources used to achieve the results.

Governance reform is an area where many regions have already taken steps for increased efficiency and good governance. It would be useful to collect the best practices from the regions and to discuss their introduction even at the global level. The European region has introduced for example:

- a rolling agenda, which enables longer term planning of agendas
- improved rules for the submission of and amendments to resolutions
- a code of conduct for the nominations and electoral campaigns of the Regional Director.

We believe that one important aspect of the reform has not yet been discussed, the WHO work at the country level. In order to have a meaningful discussion, we would need thorough information about the methods of work in country offices, their size and budget in different countries and an analysis of the challenges as well as examples of best practices. A country strategy should also include a discussion on WHO work with countries that do not have a country office.

In order to improve the alignment between the different levels and regions of the organization, we propose the institutionalization of already introduced groups: the global policy group, the category networks and other groups that improve collaboration and the sharing of information and knowledge within the organization.

Full transparency is only achieved through developing genuine accountability throughout the organization, at all levels.

Outi Kuivasniemi  
Ministerial Counsellor for International Affairs  
Ministry of Social Affairs and Health  
Finland

## **Overview of reform implementation**

### **Executive Board decision 136(16) of 3 February 2015**

#### **German submission with regard to operative paragraph 1 (a) and operative paragraph 2 of the decision**

With regard to the working methods of the governing bodies, in particular on agenda-setting and the handling of draft resolutions and proposed agenda items, Germany would like to discuss potential ways of linking additional agenda items and proposals for draft resolutions to the support of a certain number of MS from a certain number of regions.

Regarding concrete ways to improve alignment of the governance of all three levels of the Organization, so as to improve accountability and effectiveness, Germany sees great merit in covering in the inclusive MS consultative process on governance reform in detail:

- the potential discussion of the WHO country presence report in the governing bodies in order to allow MS to provide their guidance on how to strengthen WHO's performance in countries;
- the need of transparent internal communication streams as a catalyst for achieving improved corporate alignment;
- all potential proposals to strengthen the accountability between the DG and the RDs. In this regard, a background paper on the legal basis of accountability lines between the RDs and DG as well as a summary of historic approaches to strengthen these accountability lines including proposals by JIU (report from 1993) would be an important basis to discuss potential deficits and concrete ways to strengthen the accountability and effectiveness;
- the introduction of the "accountability compact" that has already been established between the DG and the ADG level (see EBPBAC21/4 para 2) also between the DG and the RDs.

**Permanent Mission of India**  
**Geneva**

India's inputs on the Method of the work of governing bodies (EB 136/6)

**I. Promoting manageable agendas**

According to the Rules of Procedure of the WHA, any item proposed by a Member or by an Associate Member shall be included as agenda Rule 5 (d). It would be prudent that while selecting or rejecting the agenda items, the Office of the Board should apply the criteria in a transparent manner and provide reasons for their decisions to select or reject the proposed agenda item.

**II. Reform of reporting requirements**

There is a need for a flexible reporting requirements. However, it is important to have reporting requirements. As far as country reporting is concerned a web based platform should be established for countries to submit their reports as and when there is a specific requirement for national reports in the resolution.

According the proposal of the Secretariat, there is no requirement of reporting after three biennial reports. Therefore, as far as the progress report on implementation of resolution or decision is concerned, there is need to continuous reporting. However, a flexible approach can be followed in this regard and 'make the reporting requirements after three biennial reports' can be made once in five years in the absence of a new resolution or decision on the respective agenda item.

**III. Encourage early discussion on draft resolution**

The proposal for 'encourages early discussion on draft resolution' is a welcome step. The Secretariat must transmit the draft resolution to the Member States within a stipulated timeframe of within 5 to 6 weeks prior to the meetings.

If there is no consensus on a resolution during the EB session then few informal consultations should be institutionalized to arrive at a consensus instead of keeping the negotiation till the World Health Assembly. The consultation can be organised at the Headquarters and ICT tools can be used to ensure participation from capital.

**IV. Establish a Webpage for Statements**

Due to time constraints, often the Member States are not able to deliver their full statements. It is advisable that a webpage should be created where the statements from all the Member States could be uploaded for all the formal meetings. Further, it will also be important that webcast of any formal meetings should also be available for viewing after the meeting is over.

V. **Timely Distribution of Documentation**

The application of word limit would result in editing of information. This may hamper an informed decision-making. Therefore there should not be any word limit for documents. At the same time we understand most of the documents are prepared by the Secretariat and therefore the Secretariat documents should be made available at least 5 to 6 weeks prior to the Governing Body meeting.

VI. **Standardization of format of documents by the Secretariat**

In order to ensure better participation of the Member States, the Secretariat needs to prepare documentation containing the history of WHO's efforts in each agenda item including the relevant WHA resolutions/decisions, current activities at three levels, financial and human resources deployed for the activities as well as source of financing. The document also should contain the URL for the past discussions or deliberations on the similar agenda item. If required, the Secretariat can hold briefings on the relevant agenda items.

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### **Japan's comments on overview of reform implementation**

We would like to provide our inputs and proposals, as called for on the decision EB136(16) in operative paragraph 1 (a).

With regards to the WHO Reform stage 2 evaluation, Japan fully agrees with the WHO's proposal. We satisfy with WHO's achievements, including the remarkable decrease of the number of the agenda item of EB and observance of speech time. We hope that WHO steadily continues to implement the reform items.

As for the concrete ways to improve the alignment of all three levels of WHO, the management of human resources and budget is important to work effectively.

Japan proposes 1) the mobility of human resources to realize the good alignment of three levels of WHO and 2) the effective budget allocation at the three levels

1) The advantage of the mobility of human resources is as follows.

First, the staff who mobilizes among the three levels can experience WHO's work at all the levels. It makes him/her understand WHO's work as a whole and its effective and efficient job allocation would be expected.

Secondly, the diverse organization has flexibility and resilience. The diversity of the organization enables to respond the global issues that have various backgrounds.

Thirdly, specialists move among three levels based on the needs of each level and, consequently, all three levels of WHO can keep the appropriate number of specialists at every level.

2) With regards to the budget allocation, the planning in the headquarter and its implementation in the regional offices and/or country offices should be harmonized in order to implement its action plan smoothly and strategically in all the three levels. For this purpose, we should allocate the budget at each level depending on its situation.



## **Decisión EB136(16): Panorama general de la aplicación de la reforma**

### **Comentarios de México**

- i. La reforma de la Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS u Organización) es uno de los temas prioritarios de México en el seno de los órganos rectores de la Organización. En ese sentido, estamos atentos a la implementación de la reforma, conscientes de que no es un ejercicio acabado, sino un trabajo continuo de mejora.
- ii. Respal damos a esta Organización, que desde 1948 ha asumido el liderazgo que da objeto a su Constitución para alcanzar el goce del grado máximo de salud para todos los pueblos. El proceso de reforma actual deriva de un reconocimiento de los retos, pero sobre todo, de la necesidad de fortalecer a la OMS para alcanzar sus más altos fines.
- iii. Es crucial que la OMS retome un papel más activo en la gobernanza sanitaria y se consolide como autoridad directiva y coordinadora en asuntos de sanidad internacional. Las situaciones límite como la aparición de emergencias sanitarias de importancia internacional nos recuerdan la importancia de contar con una Organización sólida.
- iv. Si bien el proceso de reforma ha comenzado a mostrar resultados concretos en temas como el financiamiento, creemos que la gobernanza debe concentrar nuestros esfuerzos, en pos del fortalecimiento de los procesos para la toma de decisiones.
- v. México considera que la gobernanza de la Organización debe entenderse en su sentido más integral, por lo que, sin menoscabo del trabajo hecho con anterioridad, es necesario que exista coherencia política e institucional entre los diversos elementos de la reforma.
- vi. Bajo este esquema, impulsamos la decisión en el seno del Consejo Ejecutivo para explorar cuáles son los alcances de la reforma de la gobernanza, señalando aquellos puntos donde se haya avanzado y trayendo a debate aquellos otros donde se requiere la intervención de los Estados para generar una masa crítica que impulse los cambios.

- vii. Tomando en cuenta las disposiciones de los párrafos OP1 y OP3 de la decisión EB136(16), a continuación se presentan en primer lugar los hallazgos, comentarios y sugerencias sobre los métodos de trabajo y en un segundo término, sobre formas concretas de cómo mejorar la alineación de la gobernanza en los tres niveles de la Organización, reforzando la **rendición de cuentas** y la **efectividad**.
- viii. Cabe mencionar que para México las tareas del Grupo de Trabajo creado en virtud de la decisión EB136(16) deben procurar un balance entre las discusiones sobre los métodos de trabajo de los órganos de gobierno y sobre la alineación de los tres niveles de gestión la Organización:

### **Métodos de trabajo**

1. Es necesario fortalecer el proceso para la adopción de las decisiones por los órganos deliberantes. Los Estados deberían contar con la información técnica pertinente, así como sobre las implicaciones financieras de las decisiones.
2. Asimismo, no debe perderse de vista el carácter político de los órganos rectores. La Organización podría promover espacios de diálogo que permitan a los Estados Miembros preparar con más oportunidad y eficacia la agenda temática de dichos órganos.
3. En razón de los dos puntos anteriores, resulta necesario mejorar los métodos de comunicación y la difusión de la información técnica para beneficiar las discusiones de los Estados Miembros. De igual manera es necesario llegar a un acuerdo consensuado sobre las posibles modificaciones que se requieren al calendario formal de reuniones de los órganos de gobierno, así como al calendario de trabajo inter-sesional.
4. Se considera necesario promover la adopción de órdenes del día razonables a corto plazo. Con ello, se promovería la racionalización de los debates y, en principio, la profundización en aquellos temas que requieran una revisión especial.
5. Se reconoce ampliamente el esfuerzo por lograr la distribución puntual de la documentación antes de las reuniones del Consejo; sin embargo, se observa que sigue habiendo retos importantes para que los Estados Miembros conozcan con suficiente antelación el trabajo que la Secretaría hace en este rubro.
6. Se requiere que las propuestas que se presenten en el seno de los órganos rectores tomen en cuenta las definiciones y prioridades de las estrategias a

largo plazo para el presupuesto y financiación de los gastos de administración. Ello debe coincidir con la estrategia financiera global, abarcando la asignación de recursos estratégicos, el seguimiento de recursos y su gestión.

7. Asimismo, resulta necesario que la OMS tenga mejores directrices en el sistema de gestión basado en los resultados y en la adopción de un marco para la gestión de riesgos corporativos, incluidas directrices claras, plazos concretos y entregables. El sistema de gestión de la Organización debe alimentar a su vez, de manera constante, las discusiones de los órganos de gobierno.
8. Las deficiencias del marco de control interno han llevado a no respetar los reglamentos y normas en diversos procesos administrativos. Se observa la necesidad de trabajar en lo relativo al equilibrio de género y geográfico, y a las tasas globales de cumplimiento del Sistema de Gestión y Mejora del Desempeño de la Organización.
9. Resulta conveniente que la Reforma de la OMS trabaje en las deficiencias normativas, operativas y técnicas que se han detectado y que se consideren evaluaciones no sólo al proceso de Reforma sino también a los informes del Comisario de Cuentas y de los Auditores, a fin de hacer frente a las deficiencias institucionales.

### **Alineación en los tres niveles**

1. Es pertinente continuar trabajando en promover la transparencia y una mayor comunicación entre los niveles mundial y regional. En ese sentido, resulta necesario fortalecer las medidas destinadas a aplicar la reforma en los países, centradas en tres prioridades:
  - a. El fortalecimiento de la función de facilitación y congregación de la OMS en los países;
  - b. La armonización del proceso de planificación y asignación de recursos con las prioridades de la cooperación de la OMS con los países, y
  - c. La resolución de las dificultades relacionadas con los recursos humanos en los países.
2. Para el caso de la Región de las Américas, las decisiones de la OMS no siempre están alineadas a esquemas de trabajo, ni actividades de trabajo

propios de la OPS. Por ello, debe fomentarse un diálogo permanente entre las prioridades de estos dos niveles y sobre la mejor manera de obtener el mayor grado de alineación.

3. Las oficinas regionales deben servir como un canal de comunicación eficaz entre las prioridades acordadas en la sede y las necesidades de cada país. El conocimiento consolidado en el terreno de estas oficinas podría servir como la base para la definición de mejores medios para la implementación de acciones decididas para el marco global.
4. Es conveniente insistir en la necesidad de trabajar de manera más coordinada con las representaciones a nivel país y regionales, a fin de crear sinergias entre las prioridades, objetivos y estrategias.
5. Las oficinas de país deben tener entre sus prioridades el fortalecimiento de las capacidades institucionales de los países donde residen, particularmente a través de la compartición de conocimientos, experiencias y buenas prácticas, de manera sistemática y con base en la apertura y difusión de la información.

Asimismo y para fortalecer los puntos anteriores, se requiere no perder de vista los siguientes elementos transversales, que podrían convertirse en los **cinco principios de la gobernanza** en toda la Organización:

- I. **Apropiación.** Resulta fundamental que las decisiones de la Organización se tomen considerando los más altos estándares técnicos. Sin embargo, se debe trabajar en el fomento de la apropiación por parte de los Estados de las decisiones de la OMS, manteniendo un método de consulta y deliberación tanto permanente como predecible, durante todo el proceso que conlleva a la toma de decisiones. De igual manera es importante asegurar altos estándares de apertura y transparencia en todas las actividades técnicas y especializadas que se emprenden dentro de la Organización.
- II. **Liderazgo.** Habida cuenta el mandato otorgado por los Estados, la Organización debe consolidarse como el principal punto de referencia técnico sobre los aspectos de la salud mundial dentro del sistema multilateral.
- III. **Coherencia:** Las prioridades fijadas por los Estados en conjunto con la Organización, bajo un mandato claro fundamentado en la evidencia

científica, deben guiar las labores de la Organización en los tres niveles y a través de sus ejes de prioridades temáticas.

- IV. **Colaboración.** Considerando la naturaleza transversal de los temas sanitarios, debe promoverse el establecimiento de relaciones con actores gubernamentales y no gubernamentales. Se reconocen los avances en el diseño de un marco de colaboración sobre actores no estatales, que brinde certeza, legalidad, legitimidad y una base firme para la colaboración.
  
- V. **El rol central de la prevención.** La promoción de la salud debe ser el punto de inicio de los trabajos de la Organización. La reforma de la gobernanza debe incluir un cambio de enfoque global, que permeé los niveles regional y nacional, para que la prevención sea la piedra angular en la promoción de estilos de vida saludables.

## **Decision EB136(16): Overview of reform implementation**

### **Comments by Mexico**

- i. The reform of the World Health Organization (WHO, the Organization) is a priority for Mexico within the governing bodies of the Organization. Accordingly, we are attentive to the implementation of reform, aware that it is not a completed process but rather a work in progress aiming for improvements.
- ii. We support WHO, which since 1948 has assumed a leadership role in the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health, the objective laid down in its Constitution. The current reform process flows from a recognition of the challenges and above all from the need to strengthen WHO to attain its highest goals.
- iii. It is crucially important that WHO play a more active role in health governance and consolidate its position as the directing and coordinating authority on international health work. Extreme situations such as health emergencies of international concern remind us of the importance of a robust Organization.
- iv. Although the reform process has begun to show specific results in the area of financing, for example, we think our efforts should be focused on governance, with a view to strengthening decision-making processes.
- v. Mexico is of the view that the governance of the Organization should be interpreted holistically, because, with due respect for the work undertaken to date, there should be political and institutional coherence between the various components of reform.
- vi. Within this framework, we endorse the decision by the Executive Board to explore the scope of governance reform, indicating those points where progress has been made and flagging for debate those where intervention is required from Member States to generate a critical mass to drive forward change.
- vii. Further to paragraphs OP1 and OP3 of decision EB136(16), we hereby present our views, comments and suggestions on working methods, and then on concrete ways to improve the alignment of the governance of all three levels of the Organization so as to improve **accountability** and **effectiveness**.

- viii. For Mexico, the terms of reference of the working group established under decision EB136(16) should strike a balance between discussions on the working methods of the governing bodies and the alignment of the three levels of the Organization:

### **Working methods**

1. The decision-making process in the governing bodies must be strengthened. States should be provided with relevant technical information and the financial implications of their decisions.
2. Nor should we lose sight of the political character of the governing bodies. The Organization could promote forums for dialogue enabling Member States to prepare the agendas of these bodies in a more timely and effective manner.
3. Given the two preceding points, the means of communicating and disseminating technical information to Member States should be improved. Likewise, consensus should be reached on any changes required to the formal calendar of governing bodies meetings and the calendar of intersessional work.
4. In the short term, agendas of a reasonable length need to be adopted. This will streamline the debates and, in theory, ensure that topics requiring particular attention are discussed in more depth.
5. We fully acknowledge the efforts made to distribute documentation promptly prior to meetings of the Board; nevertheless, we note that important challenges remain in ensuring that Member States are informed sufficiently far in advance of the work being done by the Secretariat in this area.
6. Proposals presented in the governing bodies should take account of the definitions and priorities in the long-term strategies for the budget and the financing of administrative costs. This should dovetail with the global financial strategy and include the allocation of strategic resources and the monitoring and management of resources.
7. Likewise, WHO should have better guidelines on results-based management and adopt a framework for the management of corporate risks, including clear guidelines, specific time frames and deliverables. The Organization's management system should in turn provide material for ongoing discussion in the governing bodies.
8. The shortcomings of the internal oversight framework have led to a failure to comply with regulations and standards in a number of administrative

processes. Work needs to be done in the areas of gender balance, equitable geographical distribution, and the global compliance rates of the Organization's Performance Management Improvement System.

9. WHO reform should focus on the normative, operational and technical shortcomings that have been identified, and evaluations should be carried out of the reform process and the reports of the External and Internal Auditors with a view to addressing institutional shortcomings.

### **Alignment of the three levels**

1. It is important to continue to promote transparency and more communication between the global and regional levels. Accordingly, the means to implement reform at country level should be strengthened, based on three priorities:
  - a. WHO's role as an inclusive facilitator and convener at country level;
  - b. aligning the planning and resource allocation process with the priorities for WHO cooperation at country level, and
  - c. resolving the country-level challenges of human resources.
2. In the Region of the Americas, WHO's decisions are not always aligned with PAHO workplans or activities. Therefore, ongoing dialogue needs to be encouraged about priorities at these two levels and how they might be better aligned.
3. The Regional Offices should act as an effective channel of communication between the priorities set at Headquarters and individual country needs. The consolidated field expertise of the offices could serve as a basis for identifying better ways to implement actions decided upon for the global framework.
4. Work with country and regional offices needs to be more coordinated to create synergies between priorities, objectives and strategies.
5. Country offices should prioritize institutional capacity-building in the countries where they operate, particularly through the sharing of expertise, experiences and best practices, in a systematic way and based on the open dissemination of information.



In addition, and to strengthen the elements above, we should not lose sight of the following cross-cutting components that could be expanded into **five principles of governance** for the entire Organization:

- I. **Ownership.** It is fundamentally important that the decisions of the Organization should be based on the highest technical standards. However, States need to take ownership of WHO decisions, through consultation and deliberative mechanisms that are both continuous and predictable, throughout the decision-making process. Likewise, it is important to ensure high standards of openness and transparency in all the technical and specialized activities of the Organization.
- II. **Leadership.** Under its mandate from Member States, the Organization must consolidate its position as the principal point of technical reference for aspects of global health within the multilateral system.
- III. **Coherence:** The priorities set by Member States in partnership with the Organization, under a clear mandate based on scientific evidence, should guide the Organization's work at the three levels and through its priority thematic areas.
- IV. **Engagement.** Considering the cross-cutting nature of health topics, engagement with State and non-State actors should be encouraged. We recognize the progress that has been made in establishing a framework of engagement with non-State actors, which provides certainty, legality, legitimacy and a firm basis for partnership.
- V. **The central role of prevention.** Health promotion should be the starting point of the Organization's work. Governance reform should include a change in global approach that permeates down to the regional and country levels, thereby ensuring that prevention becomes the cornerstone of the promotion of healthy lifestyles.

## Swedish input on Governance reform process

Sweden warmly welcomes the establishment of a process to take us forward in governance reform, an important area of WHO reform. Governance reform, which mostly depend on us MS, has made far too little progress and has come to seriously hamper our ability to prepare as well as participate and take well-founded decisions in our governing bodies. We therefore look forward to engage constructively and substantially with other MS in this process, and with a view to prepare for this we would like to submit the following input to the working group and the electronic platform:

1. In this process we wish to recall two conclusions in the Second stage evaluation:
  - Governance reform has made comparatively slow progress. The challenge in this area is now to ensure that the actual work of Member States moves towards more strategic focused working arrangements and better coordination between the EB, WHA and Regional Committees.
  - Governance is the area of reform where success is most dependent on the ability of Member States to adapt their individual and collective behaviours.
  
2. Urgent points to address by the working group in the governance reform process is in our view:
  - Better management of the EB and WHA agendas, including ways to limit the number of items on the agenda and structure the agenda to allow sufficient time for the most strategically important agenda items
  - Better management of resolutions
  - Improved functioning of the Bureau of the EB, recalling its responsibility to use criteria, including those used for priority setting in the draft general programme of work, in reviewing items for inclusion on the Board's agenda (WHA65(9))adequate preparations for chairs and EB members
  - Adequate preparations for officials (president and chairs of committees) of the WHA
  - Better management of the working schedule including how to limit evening and weekend sessions
  
3. in addressing the above we urge to build on earlier proposals and recommendations, in particular (see attachment):
  - the proposals in doc 134/6 Add.2 that were not addressed in the final decision EB134/3
  - the recommendations on governance reform from the Second stage evaluation
  - JIU report EB132/5 Add.6
  - Decision WHA67(8) Consideration of the financial and administrative implications for the Secretariat of resolutions proposed for adoption by the EB or WHA

## **(Sweden)**

### **Previous proposals and recommendations for the working group to consider in the governance reform process**

#### **Doc 134/6 Add.2**

##### Proposals in doc 134/6 Add.2 that were not considered in decision EB134/3:

(14) to adopt the following additional procedures for preparation of the agenda of the Executive Board on a trial basis, with effect from the closure of the 134th session through the closure of the 138th session:

(a) The officers of the Board, when drawing up the provisional agenda under Rule 8 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board will endeavour not to exceed a maximum optimal number of items such that the provisional agenda will contain no more than 36 items in non-budget years, and 48 items in budget years.

(b) In doing so, the Officers of the Board will use the criteria established by the Board in resolution EB121.R11 (the "agreed criteria") in the following manner: Except for items that are recurring or mandated by the Board or Assembly, items will be assigned a number from 1 to 3 corresponding to how many of the agreed criteria each item fulfils and will be prioritized accordingly, such that items that fulfil all three of the agreed criteria will have priority over items fulfilling two criteria, and items fulfilling two criteria will have priority over those fulfilling one priority. Items which do not fulfil any criteria will be excluded.

Optional Additional Element:

The Director-General will provide to the Officers of the Board, in order to facilitate the above-referenced process, the results of [a technical assessment of the proposed items in light of the agreed criteria by the Secretariat][an assessment of the proposed items in light of the agreed criteria by a group composed of two representative from each WHO region.]

(c) One week before the opening of the January session of the Board, the Director-General will consult with the Officers of the Board to consider the Board's provisional agenda and supplementary agenda and prepare recommendations for inclusion, exclusion or deferral for the Board. In doing so they will again endeavour not to exceed the maximum optimal number of items, as referred to in paragraph 14(a). Consistent with Rule 10bis, the Board may add to, delete from, or amend the agenda, taking into account the agreed criteria, and endeavouring not to exceed the maximum optimal number of items.

(15) to review the results of these additional procedures at its 138th session;

(16) to recommend that the Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly suspend the requirement in paragraph 7(a) of decision WHA65(9) regarding the use of the criteria used for priority setting in the General Programme of Work, for the duration of the trial period herein mentioned.

Criteria for urgent items and late resolutions

(17) to require that proposals for urgent items under Rule 10, and resolutions submitted after the deadline provided in paragraphs 7 above, have cosponsorship of at least 12 Member States from at least three WHO regions in order to be receivable.

### **JIU report Review of Management, Administration and decentralization in the World Health Organization (EB132/5 Add.6)**

17. Based on their review of governing body documents and interviews with Member State representatives and WHO officials in headquarters and in the regions, the Inspectors draw the attention of Member States to some additional issues to be addressed in order to make the functions of the governing bodies more efficient:

- Long and not prioritized/grouped agenda items resulting in insufficient time for meaningful discussions;
  - Repetition and overlaps of agenda items and discussions of the same issues at different levels of the governing bodies;
  - Lack of training and insufficient preparation of office holders and governing body members;
  - Insufficient systematic preliminary briefings to Member States on important issues on the agenda;
  - Potential to delegate some responsibilities from the Health Assembly to the Executive Board and from the Executive Board to Programme, Budget and Administration Committee of the Executive Board (PBAC) including decision making;
  - Need for improved IT search tools to facilitate a better handling of governing body documentation and related databases by Member States;
  - Limited attention to oversight-related issues; and
- Late issuance of documents.

18. Since the most critical issues have been subject to discussion and addressed in the reform process, the Inspectors have abstained from making concrete recommendations thereon. Nevertheless, they would like to underline the importance of proposals directed towards having the voice of the regions and countries better heard at global level based on regional level discussions. In terms of the structure of the agenda, the Inspectors advise the regrouping of agenda items by clusters to facilitate decision-making, the biennial consideration of some items, and the introduction of sunset provisions for resolutions and reporting obligations. Further, the preparation of sessional work could be improved by enhancing inter-sessional work through formal and informal meetings, better and wider use of electronic communication and timely issuance of documents in all WHO official languages. This may lead to the need to strengthen the capacity of the Governing Body Section (GBS) that handles relations with Member States. In addition, Member State representatives are invited to change certain established practices.

## Second stage evaluation by PWC

WHO governance reform focuses on increasing transparency in governing body processes and alignment between the global and regional levels (1(b) i beslutet). It encompasses five major areas of work of which two are referred to below:

- Harmonising and aligning governance processes and ensuring the interconnectedness at all levels, by aligning RC rules of procedures on the selection process for Regional Directors (RD), the review of credentials of delegates and the participation of non-Member States observers to RCs;
  - ✓ The scheduling of governing body meetings has not changed.
  - ✓ WHA's decision to harmonise the nomination process for Regional Directors, the review of credentials, and participation of observers have been implemented by all RCs.
  - ✓ Several global resolutions have been taken forward at the regional level. At the same time however, there is not a systematic mechanism to integrate WHA global resolutions into the RC agenda-setting and no formal coordination to ensure their implementation at country-level, which is where it matters. There is also no formal reporting to the EB of those resolutions by Member States. We also note that RC reporting to the EB does not follow a blueprint or specific guidance issued by HQ. This does not allow to align reporting and content across regions, and to facilitate the monitoring of the translation of global resolutions at regional and country level. This is a challenge given the reform's objective for more coherence across the organisation.
    - *Structural changes conducive to increased linkages between regions and HQ and harmonisation of working practices between regions are now in place. They provide a starting point from which to build on and improve. This notably involves continuous drive to ensure WHA resolutions are consistently translated at regional and country level.*
- Simplifying the processes to achieve more efficient decision-making by governing bodies, including addressing agenda setting and the timing for the issuance of documentation to Member States;
  - ✓ Limiting the number of resolutions passed is at the core of WHO's ability to prioritise. Feedback from Member States interviewed is that the passing of resolutions could be done more strategically. The rules and procedures provide for a variety of ways in which draft resolutions can be presented to the EB and adopted by the WHA. The current process has shown that, either draft resolutions recommended by the EB are re-opened and amended during the WHA or new resolutions are presented by Member States, whether or not the EB had recommended to the WHA a draft resolution on the same item. This creates a burden on Member States to re-draft resolutions, poses a strain on the WHA's workload and a challenge of strategic and efficacy nature to reach consensus within shorter timelines. As a result, resolutions may not address WHO's core

competencies and Member States may not have the chance to assess the budget implications of resolutions. Amendments to the rules and procedures of the EB were prepared<sup>21</sup> by the Secretariat to limit the untimely submission and number of draft resolutions, notably where the PBAC would play a more active role in assessing the financial feasibility of adopting resolutions. The EB requested the Secretariat to elaborate its proposals in the overall context of the rules of procedure and to report again to the 134th EB in January 2014. More joint work is required from Member States and the Secretariat to agree on guidelines and procedures that will resolve this issue.

- ✓ The EB has yet to agree on a set of criteria for selecting items that should be part of its provisional agenda. In May 2013, two options for the inclusion, exclusion or deferral of items on the provisional agenda of the EB (EB133/3) were presented<sup>22</sup> to the EB with the goal to agree on a clarified process and criteria to guide the selection of agenda items. Member States asked for further work on Option 2 so that it could be approved and better prioritization could take place. The challenge here is ensuring the right balance of agenda items so that they can be discussed in depth. As an illustration, the number of agenda items to be reviewed by the EB increased 40% between 2003 and 2014, from approx. 45 to 63 and that of the PB nearly doubled between 2012 and 2013, largely because of the presence of reform-related agenda items<sup>23</sup>. Considering that EB meetings range between 5 and 7 days, depending on non-PB or PB years, the average remains one report per hour per day. In January 2014, more than 60 agenda items are to be covered in 5 days only, reducing Member States' time for deliberations. This constrained timeframe does not allow for adequate deliberations and decision-making altogether. The number and complexity of issues to be discussed added to the late issuance of documentation is not conducive to empowering the PBAC and EB to fulfil their respective roles. There is an intrinsic tension between the sovereign right of Member States to pursue their policies and the need to have a realistic number of agenda items at governing bodies.
- ✓ Documentation to the governing bodies has doubled over the past 5 years and continues to be made available to Member States in an untimely manner. The number of pages in documentation has gone from 347 pages at the EB-122nd session in 2008 to 775 at the EB-132nd session in 2013. This is closely linked to the fact that the number of agenda items has continued to grow over the years. On the other hand, Member States have highlighted that documentation tends to arrive in an untimely manner. Combined with the increase in documentation, the absorption capacity of Member States is challenged, particularly that of smaller delegations. Member States have suggested moving the period for submission from 6 to 3 weeks.
- ✓ The amendments to the Rules and Procedures of the EB and governing bodies, presented in January 2013 (EB132/5 Add.3), to limit the late submission of draft resolutions and to limit the number of agenda items have yet to be finalised. New recommendations to the Rules and Procedures are expected to be presented at the EB session in January 2014 for endorsement. Addressing this governance issue is at the core of the ability of governing bodies to become more strategic in the way they address agenda items and manage resolutions.

- *The Organization has not resolved the intrinsic tension between the sovereign right of Member States to pursue their policies and the need to have a realistic number of agenda items at governing bodies. The ultimate result is, however, detrimental to all, including to those Member States exerting their sovereignty. This leads to: a lack of adequate time to prepare for governing body meetings, strategic items not being discussed in sufficient depth and decisions being postponed. Refer to section 9.1.2 for the related recommendation.*

### Recommendations

#### 3. Shifting to strategic decision-making

With structural changes to governing body meetings proceedings now implemented, much of the success of the governance reform relies on Member States actually shifting to more strategic decision-making. This involves a manageable number of items to be discussed at governing body meetings, an adequate degree of preparation for governing body meetings and proper handling of meetings and discussions by Member States.

- The support for and role of committee chairs in effecting proper division of labour and coordination between committees should be reinforced. This includes notably:
  - Adequate definition of skills, training and support requirement for committee chairs. The role of committee chairs is intensive, not just during meetings themselves but also inter-sessionally. The support provided by the Secretariat should be tailored to the experience and support available to them in their home countries. The process of induction of committee chairs could also be used to assess training needs for chairs. Where needed, this could take the form of peer coaching from previous chairs or retired chairs. Some criteria for the experience, skills and attitudes in the appointment of chairs should also be explored.
  - Setting-up a formal process to ensure regular communication between the chairs of EB, PBAC and RCs is strengthened prior to and after governing body meetings. This will ensure proper delineation of focus and clarify expectations and modalities of required information flows between the committees.
  - Ensuring that chairs and bureaus are empowered to define a manageable agenda for meetings. The EB should consider agreeing on a set of clear criteria for agenda-setting and formalising its use with the goal of empowering its Board officers to select the most strategic agenda items to be discussed at meetings. Some targets on the evolution of the number of agenda items over time should be set. The definition of the exact range is outside of the scope of this evaluation. However based on a review of the agendas of other global health organizations, a range of around 7 items per day is the norm, compared to 9.2 per day on average in 2013 for WHO. Given the fact that Member State interventions tend to extend the time spent on each agenda items, the 7 item benchmark should be considered as an upper limit. Alternatively a statistical analysis of the average time taken by agenda items presented to committees for decision, discussion, guidance and/or information could help in defining average anticipated duration of discussion on agenda items.

These averages could be used as a starting point or sanity check on the reasonableness of draft agendas. Whilst this approach has obvious limitations, it can provide some bearings to limit the time spent on agenda items.

- Adequate consultations on proposals for the management of agenda items, resolutions and the running of governing body meetings prepared by the Secretariat should take place prior to their formal discussions in governing body meetings to ensure contradictory views are reconciled proactively (also refer to recommendation 9.3.5 on this point). Should Member States wish to take an even more active role in the definition of these rules of procedures, ultimately an intergovernmental working group could be setup to address the matter.
- Committee Chairs should strive for more discipline during Member States interventions and monitor general behaviour at governing body meetings. In doing so they should be supported by like-minded members and the Secretariat. This includes in particular:
  - Discussing country health experiences outside of governing body meetings to allow for in-depth strategic debates with Member States on the key common topics at stake. This will increase time spent on strategy. We endorse the suggestion from a Member State interviewee that an Appendix to governing body documentation be created to compile those country health experiences that Member States wish to bring to bear, without them being discussed in governing body interventions;
  - The submission of late resolutions should be discouraged and rules and procedures of the WHA and EB on the matter be enforced. The Organization should consider whether the introduction of proposals relating to agenda items 24h-36h prior to the start of governing body meetings is a sufficient time for submitting new draft resolutions (as the proposed recommendation of the Secretariat to amend rule 28 and 48-49 of the EB and WHA rules of procedures, respectively). In other international organisation governance settings, proposed agenda items are usually submitted to the Board, with documentation, at least 30-40 days prior to the governing body meeting, to allow for sufficient time for evaluation.

**Decision WHA67(8) Consideration of the financial and administrative implications for the Secretariat of resolutions proposed for adoption by the EB or WHA**

sub-para (4): requested the Director-General, in consultation with Member States, to report to the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee in January 2015 on options to ensure alignment of resolutions with the general programme of work and the related programme budgets, including how to strengthen the link between programme budgets and resolutions, reports on financial implications of resolutions and decisions adopted by the Health Assembly as well as progress reports, and providing information on the proportion of future programme budgets that results from resolutions and decisions adopted by the governing bodies.



**EB136(16) Overview of reform implementation**  
**Member States consultative process on governance reform**

***Comments of the United States of America***

The United States offers recommendations on improving WHO governance effectiveness with the goal of achieving more strategic, practical and efficient governing processes applicable to the work of the Executive Board, World Health Assembly, and Regional Committees.

As a starting point, Member States are recognizing the need to collectively be accountable for their roles in the effectiveness of WHO governance. The Executive Board and World Health Assembly are powerful and unique convening bodies and all Member States must cooperate to improve and achieve meaningful reforms. The United States acknowledges and appreciates governance reforms enacted as part of governance reform to date, such as the traffic light system, increased authorities of the Chairperson and Officers and procedural changes adopted relevant to the procedures of the Board and Assembly.

*Code of Practice*

Member States should consider developing a brief and concise non-binding Code of Practice on governance to serve as a guide for country conduct in relation to the Executive Board and WHA. Procedural best practices encompassed in such a Code are expected to enhance governance, and reduce WHO Secretariat workloads and the number of unfunded mandates. With this Code, the role of the Chair is further strengthened in ensuring Member States adhere to these practices, or demanding a rationale if violated.

Member States should debate elements to be contained in such a Code of Practice with the intent to both respect and balance the prerogative of Member States with the needs of effective governance, including the following examples of elements:

- Member States should prioritize interventions with points that support, reject or request modification of EB/WHA decisions rather than report on national action.
- Member States should more readily employ decisions rather than resolutions (a trend that has already begun).
- Member States should generally defer to regional statements when there is a common position, unless national positions include additional relevant positions or contain specific comments or requests not encompassed in the regional remarks.
- Member States should refrain from introducing agenda items relating to single disease issues, unless they have had recent scientific breakthrough or complement broader global initiatives being undertaken and resourced more broadly.
- Not every agenda item warrants a resolution and not every resolution warrants a global strategy or plan of action, particularly without new resources being committed.

### *Aligning three levels of WHO*

Member States should continue to support reforms to Human Resource policies to better align hiring decisions with WHO functions and needs at the three levels of WHO. The alignment at senior level between the Director-General and the Regional Directors is a critical element, as well as the involvement of the Director-General in the selection of Director's of Program Management (or equivalent) and Director's of Administration for direct accountability. The selection process of Regional Director's should be made more standardized according to best practices. As a collective effort, each region should adopt best practices for merit based selection and consider further changes needed to the current process, and ensure that procedures are followed in practice. In addition, to better align the three levels of WHO, each office should improve performance requirements, reevaluate chains of accountability, and critically consider the duration of all hiring decisions and projected need and cost.

Governance at the Regional Committee level needs to give high priority to regional implementation of global mandates through adopted global strategies and plans of action.

### *Side events at the WHA*

The World Health Assembly is the premier annual global health meeting and events held on its margins constitute an international awareness of public health issues of importance and draw rather than detract from the importance of the work in the WHA. Side events should complement and enhance the WHA, while being managed more systematically.