

TWELFTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

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27 May 1959

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH



COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATION, FINANCE AND LEGAL MATTERS

PROVISIONAL MINUTES OF THE SEVENTH MEETING

CORRIGENDA

Page 14

Delete the second paragraph under Section 4 ("It was not . . . except Africa")

Insert "The Committee would no doubt have very much in mind the question of the allocation of the six additional seats and would perhaps like to hear the views of his Government, which had sponsored the constitutional amendment. His Government was not making any proposal in that matter, because it would be for the Health Assembly to consider the question when it came to fill the vacant seats. The matter would, moreover, be subject to periodic review in the light of changes in the Organization's membership. If the present membership were the basis of allocation, the regional distribution of membership suggested that two of the six seats should be allotted to Europe and one to each other region except Africa. A decision could, however, be taken only at the time when the seats became available for allocation and in the light of the circumstances then prevailing."

Page 21, lines 19 and 20

Delete "possibility of reducing the frequency of Health Assemblies."

Insert "increased responsibility imposed on the Board if, or when, the principle of biennial Assemblies came to be established."

Page 21, penultimate line

Insert, between "membership" and "and the": "of the Organization"

Page 21, last line, and page 22, line 1

Delete "Though he agreed"

Insert "He considered"

Page 22, line 2

Delete "he was inclined to agree with the delegates of Liberia and India"

Insert "but expressed his sympathy regarding the remarks made by the delegate of Liberia"



COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATION, FINANCE AND LEGAL MATTERS

PROVISIONAL MINUTES OF THE SEVENTH MEETING

Palais des Nations, Geneva  
Thursday, 21 May 1959, at 9.30 a.m.

CHAIRMAN: Dr O. VARGAS-MENDEZ (Costa Rica)

CONTENTS

|  | <u>Page</u> |
|--|-------------|
| 1. Assessment of the Republic of Guinea . . . . .  | 2           |
| 2. Malaria Eradication Special Account (continued):<br>Draft resolution . . . . .  | 3           |
| 3. WHO Participation in the Expanded Programme of<br>Technical Assistance . . . . .  | 4           |
| 4. Amendment to the Constitution - increase in the number of<br>Members entitled to designate a person to serve on the<br>Executive Board (Articles 24 and 25) (Item proposed by<br>the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain<br>and Northern Ireland) . . . . . | 14          |

Note: Corrections to this provisional record should be submitted in writing to the Chief Editor, Records Service, Room A.216, within 48 hours of its distribution.

1. ASSESSMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA: Items 7.17 and 7.18.1 of the Agenda (document A12/AFL/24)

The CHAIRMAN, speaking on behalf of the Committee, welcomed the delegate of the Republic of Guinea.

Dr CAYLA (France) expressed his pleasure at seeing Guinea become a full Member of WHO.

Mr GOKA (Ghana) associated his delegation with the sentiments expressed and extended his good wishes to the delegation of Guinea.

Mr SIEGEL, Assistant Director-General, Secretary, introducing the item, said that, with the addition of the Republic of Guinea as a full Member, the Committee was faced with the function of establishing the assessment for Guinea for 1959 and 1960.

The United Nations had not yet established the assessment of Guinea and its Committee on Contributions would be meeting later that year to consider the question. He therefore suggested that WHO should follow a procedure similar to that adopted in respect of Ghana at the Tenth World Health Assembly, and that it should fix the assessment of Guinea for 1959 at the minimum assessment of 0.04 per cent. and the assessment for 1960 provisionally at 0.04 per cent., the 1960 assessment to be reconsidered by the following session of the World Health Assembly on the basis of precise information on the assessment established by the United Nations.

Assuming that the Committee agreed with that procedure, a draft resolution was included in document A12/AFL/24 along those lines.

Decision: The draft resolution was approved.

2. MALARIA ERADICATION SPECIAL ACCOUNT: Item 7.16 of the Agenda.  
(Document A12/AFL/26) (continued)

Mr SAITO (Japan), Rapporteur, read the resolution (document A12/AFL/26) drafted by the Rapporteur on the Malaria Eradication Special Account.

Mr de CONINCK (Belgium) had no particular comment to make on the draft resolution as a whole. Referring to paragraph 9, he said that his delegation, while fully appreciating the magnitude of the malaria problem, was obliged to reserve its position in respect of any proposal which might be made to the Thirteenth World Health Assembly to finance the malaria eradication programme from the regular budget.

Dr LAYTON (Canada) wished to record his Government's objection in principle to the establishment for various purposes of separate funds and accounts outside the regular budget. While his delegation would bring the question of funds for malaria eradication to the attention of the appropriate authorities in Canada and while it would support the draft resolution before the Committee, he wished to make it clear that it was not thereby committing the Canadian Government to making any contribution to the Special Account.

Dr BERNHARDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation was prepared to approve the draft resolution, including the provisions of paragraph 6. As had been stated by his delegation at the fourth plenary meeting, his Government, which had already contributed \$ 47 000, was prepared to contribute a further amount of the equivalent of more than \$ 350 000 to the Special Account.

The SECRETARY suggested that the words "governments" and "Member governments" in operative paragraphs 6 and 7 respectively be amended to read "Member governments and Associate Members".

Mr BOUCHER (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), Mr TALJAARD (Union of South Africa) and Mr Le POOLE (Netherlands) made, on behalf of their Governments, reservations similar to those expressed by the delegate of Canada.

Decision: The draft resolution was adopted with the minor amendments suggested by the Secretary.

3. WHO PARTICIPATION IN THE EXPANDED PROGRAMME OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: Item 7.27 of the Agenda (Resolutions EB23.R78 and EB23.R79; Official Records No. 91, Annex 26; Document A12/AFL/13)

The SECRETARY, introducing the item, said that the Director-General's report (document A12/AFL/13) related to the administrative and financial aspects of WHO participation in the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance, the programme aspect being covered by a separate report to be considered by the Committee on Programme and Budget. Further information would be found in the resolutions adopted by the Executive Board on the subject and in Official Records No. 91, Annex 26.

Concerning the general financial situation, paragraph 3 would be of particular interest since the question of the allocation of administrative and operational services costs had repercussions on the Organization's 1959 regular budget; the Committee would have an opportunity to consider that point in connexion with the agenda item on the supplementary estimates for 1959.

In regard to local costs arrangements, referred to in paragraph 4 of that same document, he drew attention to the fact that the Technical Assistance Committee would be studying that subject further at its meeting in July with a view to adopting a simplified system.

He would be glad to give any additional information required.

Mr SYMONDS (Technical Assistance Board) referred to resolution EB23.R78 and, in particular, to paragraph 1, which expressed the hope that the financial stability of the Expanded Programme would improve and that conservative management of the financial affairs of the Expanded Programme would avoid any future danger of abrupt fluctuations in the programme levels from year to year for financial reasons.

The Executive Chairman and the Technical Assistance Board were constantly preoccupied with the finances of the Expanded Programme. In respect of 1959, for the first time since the inception of the Programme, the amount of money pledged had fallen below the amount pledged for the previous year. Several factors were responsible: governments had had to make budgetary provision for contributing also to the United Nations Special Fund; there had been a progressive reduction of the share pledged by the largest contributor; there had been certain currency devaluations, and furthermore the cost of expert services had increased since the introduction of new conditions of service.

The action taken by the Technical Assistance Board was set out in the Director-General's report and, as stated in paragraphs 2.2.1 and 2.2.2, it was expected in 1959 to earmark funds to implement only 94 per cent. of the approved programme, and planning in respect of 1960 was at present at a level 5 per cent. below that of the approved programme for 1959.

The basic difficulty was that the Expanded Programme was financed by voluntary contributions announced only two or three months before the start of the operational year and thus the Technical Assistance Board and participating organizations had to plan their programmes and to negotiate projects with governments before it was known what funds were available. Conservative management would be easier if, at the time of planning, the Technical Assistance Board knew what funds would be available. Under the present system there was certainly a danger of overestimating the amount of funds available, and all who had been concerned with the field programmes of WHO and other agencies were only too aware of the inconvenience and frustration experienced when projects had to be cut back. There could, however, be an opposite danger if the Technical Assistance Board were to take a more conservative view and were, for example, to reduce its planning level even more, as governments might then see little need to increase their contributions.

The question of country programming procedures of the Expanded Programme would be considered at the Technical Assistance Committee's summer 1959 session and the Technical Assistance Board would at that time make proposals to it which were aimed at giving the Programme greater stability from year to year.

Mr KITTANI (Iraq) said that his Government participated in the long and detailed scrutiny of the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance which was carried out as a regular procedure by the United Nations General Assembly.

His delegation, which consistently supported the Expanded Programme, deeply regretted that it was running into greater financial difficulties than ever in respect of 1959 and the years beyond. If the programme had not been severely cut back in 1959, that was only because the unprecedented step had been taken of drawing on the Working Capital and Reserve Fund; he sincerely hoped that that would be a purely temporary method and that the Fund would be restored to its former level of \$ 12 000 000. It was most unfortunate that planning for 1960 would have to be at a level 5 per cent. lower than in 1959, particularly in view of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly which called for gradual expansion of the Programme. He recalled that his delegation, as it had had occasion to state in the Second Committee of the General Assembly, could not but deplore the fact that it did not appear possible to find sufficient funds for the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance, which had been the object of praise from all quarters, at a time when billions of dollars were being spent in bilateral aid.

With regard to the simplified system of calculating the local costs payable by recipient governments, to which reference was made in paragraph 4 of document A12/AFL/13, he would be interested to know whether that system would be the simple system of percentage costs to which reference had been made at the thirteenth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. He believed that such a system had been adopted by some specialized agencies with results on the whole successful.

The SECRETARY said that while it was not possible to be completely precise as yet, he had the impression that the proposal which the Technical Assistance Board would be forwarding to the Technical Assistance Committee was likely to be a straight percentage arrangement.

The CHAIRMAN then submitted the following draft resolution for the Committee's consideration:

The Twelfth World Health Assembly,

Having considered the report by the Director-General on administrative and financial aspects of WHO participation in the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance,

1. NOTES the report;
2. ENDORSES resolutions EB23.R78 and EB23.R79 of the Executive Board.

Mr Le POOLE (Netherlands) reserved his delegation's position in respect of the draft resolution, since the absorption by the specialized agencies' regular budgets of administrative and operational services costs was to be discussed by the Technical Assistance Committee and the Economic and Social Council. He did not however, formally propose any change in the draft resolution.

Miss McPHERSON (Australia) reserved her Government's position in respect of the endorsement by the Assembly of resolution EB23.R79. She would prefer to see WHO express its willingness gradually to assume the responsibility for administrative and operational services costs.

The SECRETARY said that, in view of the observation made by the delegate of Australia, it would seem desirable for the Committee to have an opportunity of considering whether it wished to suggest that WHO should express an opinion along those lines to the Economic and Social Council. In that connexion, he drew particular attention to the request of the Economic and Social Council to the participating organizations to consider that problem, as stated in the preamble to resolution EB23.R79. The recommendations of the Board following such consideration were contained in paragraph 2 of that same resolution and that decision had been taken on the basis of current circumstances. However, should it be the wish of the Health Assembly to initiate steps with a view to assuming gradually the responsibility for such operational costs, the Director-General would welcome that decision. In any case, should the Board's decision be endorsed at the present session, that did not preclude the Health Assembly from taking a different decision at its next session.

Mr BRADY (Ireland) said that his Government considered that administrative and operational services costs should, in principle, be met from Expanded Programme funds. From paragraph 2 of resolution EB23.R79, it would appear that the Executive Board was satisfied to accept the existing arrangement of a lump sum allocation, provided it did not vary by more than 10 per cent. from the allocation for 1959. His delegation would support that arrangement, which would ensure recoupment of a large proportion of the costs.

He had been glad to note from the statement made by the representative of the Technical Assistance Board that arrangements were in train to give the Expanded Programme greater financial stability. He endorsed the prudent attitude shown towards the programme level for 1959 and 1960 and, in particular, the Director-General's approach to the reduction of the Working Capital and Reserve Fund, on which information was given in Annex 26 of Official Records No. 91.

Dr TOTTE (Sweden) supported the remarks made by the delegate of Ireland.

Mr WYATT (United States of America) associated his delegation with that of Australia in endorsing the view that administrative and operational services costs incurred in connexion with the Expanded Programme should be included in the regular budget of WHO without provision for reimbursement.

Mr JAY (Canada) was not entirely clear as to the precise effect which the adoption of a draft resolution on the subject at the present stage would have.

WHO had been asked to transmit its views to the Technical Assistance Committee and to the Economic and Social Council. It seemed to him that there were a variety of ways in which that could be done. To use the form of a resolution might limit flexibility of future action. While his delegation believed that the Technical Assistance programme should continue to bear administrative costs, it felt most strongly that each agency was part of the United Nations group and that it would be unfortunate to have to abide by some decision which was not applicable to all of them.

He wondered whether the Committee might not agree to suggesting elements for consideration which could be included in a communication from the Director-General to the Economic and Social Council. He would be glad to know whether such a procedure was possible and whether the adoption of a draft resolution at the present stage might not commit the Director-General irrevocably.

The SECRETARY explained that the adoption of the draft resolution which had been read by the Chairman would mean that the Health Assembly endorsed the two resolutions presented by the Executive Board. Those resolutions would then be transmitted to the Technical Assistance Committee and to the Economic and Social Council as an expression of opinion by WHO. In fact, those resolutions would go forward unless the Health Assembly took a different decision.

With regard to whether the draft resolution committed WHO to an irrevocable position, the Committee might find it useful to refer to paragraph 3 of resolution EB23.R79. That paragraph expressed the hope that, should changes be made in future, due account would be taken of normal budgetary processes so that a situation would not arise, as it had for 1959, where WHO was required to find funds to meet a deficit without being able to wait for the regular budgetary processes to take their normal course; on that occasion, the Director-General had made a withdrawal from the Working Capital Fund.

Mr JAY (Canada) thought that there were some elements worthy of consideration which were not covered by the draft resolution. In the first place, WHO should express its willingness to co-operate in a system which would apply to more than one agency. It should consider what long-term decision it wished to take and possibly it might wish to request the Economic and Social Council to entrust to the Technical Assistance Committee the task of devising some reasonable solution. In particular, he considered that paragraph 2 of resolution EB23.R79 was couched in very definite terms and he would question whether any organization was yet in a position to insist on what was acceptable to it.

He would be willing to submit amendments to the draft resolution presented by the Chairman if his views received some support.

The SECRETARY quoted from a resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its twenty-sixth session which contained wording similar to that used in paragraph 2 of resolution EB23.R79, to which the previous speaker had referred and on which that paragraph had been broadly based. Accordingly, it should not be taken as an indication that WHO had adopted an inflexible position. Indeed, the Organization had indicated its willingness to co-operate in every way and had merely requested that it should not be placed before a fait accompli which did not allow for its budgetary procedures.

Miss HAMPTON (New Zealand) fully appreciated the difficulties which could arise in that way from the budgetary point of view. She assured the delegate of Canada that he was not alone in feeling that some alternative form might not better meet the point at issue. Her country was a Member of the Economic and Social Council and her delegation was proposing to abstain on the draft resolution before the Committee in the interest of co-ordination with other agencies. Perhaps, if the draft resolution were to stand it might be possible to convey the summary records of the proceedings to the Economic and Social Council. If not, it would be desirable to redraft somewhat the resolution.

Mr BRADY (Ireland) drew attention to the fifth preambular paragraph of resolution EB23.R79, which stated that the question of whether or not administrative and operational service costs should be assumed by the participating organizations was for decision by the governments, which financed the regular budgets. He wondered whether the representative of the Executive Board or the Secretary could indicate when WHO would consider what policy decision to take in that matter.

The SECRETARY replied that the view which had so far been expressed by WHO, that such costs should continue to be met from Expanded Programme funds, was given in paragraph 3.2 of document A12/AFL/13. However, in view of the importance of the subject and of the observations made at the present meeting, the Committee might prefer to postpone its further consideration of the item until the following day, thus allowing sufficient time for any alternative proposals to be put forward.

To endorse the resolutions of the Executive Board would commit the Health Assembly to that position. If that were not the decision wished, then it was the Committee's duty to make that clear and it did not seem to him that the transmittal of the summary records of the proceedings would be sufficient for that purpose.

Decision: It was agreed to postpone further discussion of the item until the following day.

4. AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION - INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF MEMBERS ENTITLED TO DESIGNATE A PERSON TO SERVE ON THE EXECUTIVE BOARD:  
Item 7.13 of the Agenda (Documents Al2/AFL/2 and Add.1)

Mr BOUCHER (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), introducing the proposed amendment, said that it was the same in substance as that submitted by the delegations of Belgium, France, Italy and the United Kingdom at the Seventh World Health Assembly. On that occasion, the proposal had been fully debated and had nearly obtained the necessary two-thirds majority in committee. Since that time, the Organization's membership had increased and it seemed likely to increase again in the future. His Government was therefore convinced that there should be wider participation in the Executive Board and that a membership of twenty-four would not make it unwieldy.

It was not yet the time to make proposals in regard to the allocation of the six additional seats, but the Committee might welcome a statement of the proposing Government's ideas on the subject. It would, of course, be for the Health Assembly to take a decision when it came to fill the vacant seats and any decision would be subject to periodic review in the light of changes in the Organization's membership. But, on the basis of present membership, his Government was of the opinion that, if the membership of the Board was increased by six, it would be well to allot two seats to Europe and one to each other region except Africa.

Dr CAYLA (France) fully supported the proposed amendment of the Constitution for the reasons given by the delegate of the United Kingdom.

He expressed the hope that, with six more members, it would be possible to achieve more equitable geographical distribution within the Board, in accordance with Article 24 of the Constitution. Taking, on the one hand, the number of active Members in the region and, on the other, the number of designating States in the region, one arrived at the following percentages: The Americas, 22.7 per cent.; Eastern Mediterranean, 23 per cent.; Western Pacific, 20 per cent.; South-East Asia, 28.5 per cent.; Africa (including Guinea), 20 per cent.; and Europe, only 17.8 per cent. That under-representation of Europe should be borne in mind when the new seats were being allocated.

Dr TOGBA (Liberia) regretted that the delegate of the United Kingdom should propose an amendment merely for the benefit of his own Region. Though, at first, he had been tempted to give the amendment his full support, he had been obliged to modify his position when he had heard it suggested that none of the additional seats should be allocated to Africa.

It was from Africa that the increase in the Organization's membership had come, and a further increase in African membership could be expected in years to come when those countries, which - through the generosity of the Colonial powers - were being prepared for self-government, finally achieved their independence.

He suggested that, should the amendment be carried, one seat should be allotted to each region.

If the new seats were not so distributed, WHO would be departing from its hitherto broadminded approach to world health problems. He therefore appealed to the United Kingdom delegate to reconsider the point.

Dr MELLBYE (Norway) said that the item should be submitted to the Legal Sub-Committee before it came to the Committee on Administration, Finance and Legal Matters.

His Government further considered that the proposal before the meeting was closely linked with the frequency of World Health Assemblies (item 7.7 of the agenda) and that the two should be discussed together.

Dr VANNUGLI (Italy) said that his Government had for a long time supported the enlargement of the Executive Board and would give the amendment his unconditional support for the reasons the delegate of the United Kingdom had outlined.

It was premature to embark upon a discussion about the allocation of the new seats until the amendment had been carried. Though he appreciated the candour of the previous speakers, he felt that their remarks should be taken as comment on the situation in regard to geographical distribution in the Board at the present time. No distribution of seats could be final and, every time the Executive Board was renewed, the seats falling vacant would have to be filled to meet the requirements of the time.

Unlike the delegate of Norway, he did not consider that the item under discussion should be linked with the frequency of Health Assemblies. If the Health Assembly were to decide to meet every other year in future, that would be an additional argument in favour of enlarging the Board, but the arguments advanced independently already warranted such an enlargement.

Dr MUDALIAR (India) said that though, on previous occasions, he had felt it both unnecessary and undesirable to increase the number of seats on the Board, he had since been convinced, by the increase in membership of the Organization, that he was not justified in maintaining his stand.

He shared the view of the delegate of Italy that it was not desirable to discuss the proposal with the item concerning the frequency of Health Assemblies.

He fully agreed with the delegate of Liberia on the allocation of the new seats. When the geographical distribution of seats on the Board had last been reviewed, five had been set aside for Europe and, since that time, there had been no change in the European membership of the Organization. Moreover, equitable geographical distribution could not be based only on the number of Member States in the region. A number of factors, such as population, health problems and state of development, were relevant. He supported the delegate of Liberia's arguments in favour of the allocation of one seat to the African Region. In no continent were there more health problems than in the under-developed areas of Africa, and the Region had a large population.

He could not agree with previous speakers that it was premature to discuss the allocation of seats. It would much facilitate the work of the Health Assembly if there were some general agreement on the subject.

Professor ZHDANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) supported the United Kingdom proposal because the Organization's membership had grown in quality and quantity during the past years.

Mr CHERIF (Tunisia) said that his Government also supported the United Kingdom proposal but that that did not imply agreement with the sponsoring Government's views on what constituted an equitable geographical distribution of the new seats. On the latter subject, he fully agreed with the delegates of Liberia and India.

He shared the views of the delegate of Norway on the desirability of discussing the proposed amendment with the items on the frequency of Health Assemblies.

Dr BERNHARDT (Federal Republic of Germany) strongly supported the United Kingdom proposal.

Mr PUHAN (United States of America) also supported the United Kingdom proposal, for the reasons given by the delegate of the United Kingdom and previous speakers.

It was clear that the question of the allocation of the new seats was not a part of the proposal. It was difficult to make any suggestion on the subject at the present time and it should be left until the amendment to the Constitution had taken effect.

Mr BRADY (Ireland) said that his Government considered the proposed increase in the number of seats on the Executive Board justified, particularly since it seemed likely that the Organization's membership would increase further in the future.

His Government did not wish to commit itself on the distribution of the new seats. If the amendment were carried it would take a considerable time to obtain

the necessary formal endorsement from Member States. He agreed that it would be premature even to reach an understanding on the subject since the membership position might have changed by the time the Health Assembly was called upon to fill the new seats. He thought that the Health Assembly could be trusted to observe the provisions of the Constitution in regard to equitable geographical distribution when the time came.

Mr GOKA (Ghana) considered that it was regrettable that the Government whose generosity had led his own people to independence should at that stage embark upon the policy of pressing the claims of its own region against those of another whose interests it had so lately espoused. The United Kingdom suggestion on the allocation of the new seats had given the unfortunate impression that the sponsoring Government still wished to dominate at the international level.

He shared the views of the delegates of Liberia and India on the way in which the Organization's membership was likely to develop and felt that, if there were any increase in the number of seats on the Executive Board, the claims of the African Region deserved consideration.

Dr GOOSSENS (Belgium) also supported the United Kingdom proposals. He noted that, though there was no constitutional provision to that effect, some countries had acquired a quasi-permanent right to designate a person to serve on the Executive Board. There remained some sixty-five Member States who could hope to designate such a person about once every thirty or thirty-five years. He therefore felt that an increase was necessary.

He could not agree with the delegate of Norway that the proposal to increase the number of seats on the Executive Board should be discussed with that of the frequency of Health Assemblies. The two questions were not based on any common principle.

On the subject of the equitable geographical distribution of the new seats, he agreed with the delegates of the United States of America and Ireland that it was not indispensable to reach an agreement on the subject at the present time. He would therefore abstain from entering into the discussion. He would merely comment that at some time the European Region had had six seats out of eighteen, since when a number of Members had returned to active participation in the Organization. The delegate of India had argued - and there was much to be said for his case - that geographical distribution should not be based exclusively on the number of Member States in the region but also on the region's population, its health problems and its state of development. While that was correct, there was yet another consideration which the Committee would do well to bear in mind - the value to a technical organization of the experience and competence which certain countries had acquired.

Mr VAN LANGENBERG (Ceylon) supported the United Kingdom proposal.

It was regrettable that the question of equitable geographical distribution had been mentioned at all at the present stage, but as the subject had been raised he felt obliged to say that his views coincided with those of the delegates of Liberia and India that the number of Member States in each region could not be the only consideration. He therefore supported their suggestion that one new seat be allocated to each region.

In reply to the delegate of Belgium, on experience and competence as qualifications for a seat on the Executive Board, he pointed out that the Board should consist not only of persons qualified to take decisions but also of persons able to supply information. The under-developed countries should be given the opportunity of making themselves heard in the Board, thereby facilitating a better understanding of their problems.

Mr SEBSIBE (Ethiopia) also supported the United Kingdom proposal though he shared the views of the delegates of Liberia and India on the allocation of the new seats and the reasons for them.

Mr SAITO (Japan) said that his Government supported the proposed increase in the number of seats on the Executive Board, but did so on two conditions: firstly, that due consideration be given to equitable geographical distribution at all times (no allocation of seats to regions could be looked upon as final); secondly, that the constitutional function of members of the Board be re-examined with a view to giving them powers to act as government representatives. His Government did not wish to make a formal proposal on the latter subject at the present time.

Professor SIGURJONSSON (Iceland) said that, at the Seventh World Health Assembly, his delegation had felt that the strongest argument for an increase in the number of seats on the Executive Board was the possibility of reducing the frequency of Health Assemblies. He still considered that argument to be the strongest, although the increase in membership and the prospect of further increases made it reasonable to consider the extension of Board membership at the present time. Though he

agreed that it was premature as yet to discuss the allocation of seats to regions, he was inclined to agree with the delegates of Liberia and India on the subject in view of the probable increase in the Organization's African membership.

Dr HAN (Korea) supported the United Kingdom proposal in the belief that wider representation on the Board was desirable.

He agreed with previous speakers that it was premature to discuss the allocation of the new seats.

He hoped that it would be possible for the proposed increase to be approved speedily.

Mr CAMPICHE (Switzerland) also supported the United Kingdom proposal.

Though he shared the view that it was premature to discuss the allocation of the new seats, he had heard with interest the remarks on the subject which would be discussed at a later stage. Acting on instructions, he reserved his delegation's right to take part in that discussion.

Mr KAHANY (Israel) supported the United Kingdom proposal.

He agreed with the delegate of Ceylon that since the subject of equitable geographical distribution had been raised it was impossible to set it aside. It had become necessary to reach some understanding on the subject in order to facilitate the passage of the proposed amendment.

He supported the suggestion by the delegates of Liberia, India and others that one seat for each region was the only equitable geographical distribution.

Dr PETROVIC (Yugoslavia) agreed that the number of seats on the Board should be increased, but he shared the views of the African and Asian delegations on the distribution of the new seats.

Mr BOUCHER (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) apologized for causing such consternation with his suggestion for the allocation of the new seats. He had intended to make it perfectly clear that the question of seat allocation could only be decided in the light of conditions applying at the time when the seats came to be filled. It had been the custom to base seat allocation on the number of Member States in the various regions. As the number of seats on the Board could not be increased otherwise than in multiples of three he had intended to suggest what appeared, to his delegation, to be the best allocation of six seats at the present time. If the delegate of Liberia had argued from the same premises he could not have failed to reach the same conclusion.

Mr Boucher agreed that the membership situation might have changed by the time the seats were filled. If African membership justified the allocation of one of the new seats to that region, he would be the first to be pleased.

Mr KHANACHET (Saudi Arabia) shared the views of the delegates of Liberia and India on what constituted equitable geographical distribution.

He could not agree that it was premature to discuss the subject at the meeting in progress. As a subordinate body of the Health Assembly, the Committee was in no way pre-judging the issue if, after approving a principle, it decided how the principle was to be applied. He therefore strongly supported the views of the delegates of Liberia and India on equitable geographical distribution and their suggestion that one seat should be allocated to each region.

Dr MELLBYE (Norway) said that his delegation did not wish to oppose the amendment at the present Health Assembly and it hoped that if the proposed increase was approved due regard would be given to the principle of allowing all Member States, in rotation, an opportunity of serving on the Board.

Dr TOGBA (Liberia) expressed his gratitude to the delegate of the United Kingdom for his explanation, though he was still unable to see eye to eye with him on the allocation of the new seats. He therefore maintained his earlier suggestion and asked that it be put to the Committee as a formal proposal.

The CHAIRMAN said that as there were some speakers still to be heard, the discussion would continue in the afternoon.

The meeting rose at 12 noon.