



**World Health
Organization**

Regional Office for South-East Asia

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REGIONAL COMMITTEE

Provisional Agenda item 6.3

*Sixty-fifth Session
Yogyakarta, Indonesia
5–7 September 2012*

SEA/RC65/19 Inf.Doc.

17 July 2012

Process for Nomination of the Regional Director

**Report of the Consultative Meeting on the Process for Nomination of the
Regional Director by the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia,
WHO-SEARO, New Delhi, 13–14 March 2012**

Inaugural session

- The meeting was opened by Dr Samlee Plianbangchang, Regional Director, WHO South-East Asia (SEA) Region, and attended by 14 participants, representing 10 Member States of the Region. Maldives was unable to be represented. A list of their names and designations, together with the members of the Secretariat, may be found at Attachment 2.
- The Regional Director provided some background to this meeting, citing that WHO headquarters and four regional offices had now changed their Rules of Procedure to include an interview process for the Director-General and Regional Directors in order to strengthen transparency, fairness and equity and to permit representatives from Member States to better know the candidates in the process of nomination for the Director General/Regional Director.
- This matter had been discussed at the High Level Preparatory Meeting in June last year and also briefly at the Regional Committee last year.
- As two Member States had since written to ask the Regional Director to carry this work forward, the Regional Director had decided to call this high level Consultative Meeting to advise him on the way forward. Dr Samlee thanked the participants for sparing their time to attend this important and historic meeting.
- Dr Praveen Mishra was appointed as the Chair and Dr Sopida Chavanichkul as the Rapporteur for the meeting.

Discussions on the proposed changes to the process for nomination of the Regional Director

A. Introduction

The Secretariat introduced and explained the following documents:

- “Proposed Changes to the Process for Nomination of the Regional Director by the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia” (Ref SEA/RDO-Policy/1);
- “Process for Nomination of the Regional Director – The introduction of an interview process across WHO Regions” (Inf. Doc. 1);
- “Process for Nomination of the Regional Director: Overview of the process across WHO Regions” (Inf. Doc. 2).

The main document and the two information documents gave a detailed background of the decisions already taken by most other Regions to include an interview process in the nomination of the Regional Director, the consequent need for amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Regions concerned, the modalities used, and the final action by the Regional Committees in adopting an appropriate resolution.

The Committee noted that the introduction of an interview process would require an amendment to Rule 49: "Nomination of the Regional Director" of the Rules of Procedure of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia. This, in turn, required that under Rule 51: "Amendments of or additions to these rules may be adopted by the Committee, provided that the Committee has received and considered a report thereon by an appropriate sub-committee".

B. General discussion

Participants provided their views on the proposed improvements to the process for nomination of the Regional Director contained in the above-referenced documents.

Regarding the proposal for an interview process for candidates for the post of Regional Director, some participants expressed the view that an interview, per se, was an inappropriate format for candidates for the office of the Regional Director. The concept of a "presentation" was discussed and was considered a more desirable characterization of an opportunity for candidates to state their visions and views.

Concerning the question of when improvements in the process for nominating the Regional Director should be made, some participants expressed the view that improvements should be made in advance of the next election in 2013; others expressed the view that changes should be introduced after the 2013 election. A consensus was reached that the Amendment to Rule 49 could be adopted in RC65, in September 2012. After extensive discussions, agreement was reached to recommend that the effective date of the Amendment to the Rules of Procedure to allow for presentations by candidates would be after the 2013 election (with effect from 1 January 2014). A consensus was reached that criteria for assessing candidates is recommended for use in the 2013 election and thereafter.

Accordingly, after extensive exchange of views on these positions, the meeting reached consensus on a suggested Resolution, as found in Attachment 1, for consideration by RC65 in September 2012.

There are five aspects to this draft Resolution:

1. The participants concluded that a presentation should be given by each candidate, rather than an interview, and that Members of the Regional Committee may make requests for clarifications following the presentation.
2. The participants considered a number of modalities for such presentations and agreed on a number of terms, as contained in Annex B, for the draft resolution. The participants also considered other possible modalities, such as limiting the number of representatives of Member States attending the presentations, but concluded that such details should be determined by the Regional Committee in the future.

3. Regarding the issue of criteria for assessing candidates for the post of the Regional Director, participants considered the draft proposal contained in Document No. SEA/RDO-Policy/1 and concluded that the criteria set forth in EB97.R10 were preferable, with the following adjustments (as reflected in Annex C):
 - to use the phrase 'global health' in replacement of 'international health';
 - to reference WHO's policy on non-recruitment of smokers or other tobacco users; and
 - to reflect the fact that there is only one official language of the Region.
4. Participants agreed that the proposed criteria for assessing candidates for the post of Regional Director should be recommended for use with immediate effect.
5. The participants further recommended that the Amendment concerning presentations by candidates and modalities for such presentations, become effective from 1 January 2014, i.e. following the election of the Regional Director in September 2013.

Conclusions and recommendations

The Meeting discussed its conclusions and recommendations and finalized them in this Summary Record which was then presented to the Regional Director.

Closing session

In presenting a copy of the Summary Report to the Regional Director, the Chairperson, Dr Praveen Mishra, thanked the Regional Director for giving the participants the opportunity to be at this important and historic meeting. He thanked the participants for their very frank, constructive and positive suggestions, the manner in which they respected each other's positions, yet were able to come to a compromise/agreement on their recommendations. The Chairman sincerely hoped that the Regional Director would find these recommendations acceptable to help him moving this important process forward. In conclusion, the Chairman thanked the Rapporteur, Dr Sopida Chavanichkul, and the Secretariat for all their assistance in facilitating the meeting.

Dr Samlee Plianbangchang, Regional Director, thanked the Chairperson, the Rapporteur, the Participants and the Secretariat for the Report and the hard work put into producing it. He appreciated the work done over such a short time frame and that it was sometimes difficult to come to agreement on certain areas. He fully understood that Member States had to safeguard individual positions as part of the political dimension to this subject but was glad that consensus had been reached in the final recommendations. However, as the matter moves forward to the level of the Regional Committee (and the Sub Committee to be established under Rule 51 of the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee), there would be further opportunities to review and confirm the recommendations made by this high level Consultative Meeting.

Attachment 1

Draft Resolution

Revision of Rule 49
and process for the nomination of the Regional Director

The Regional Committee,

Having considered the Report on the Process for Nomination of the Regional Director by the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia submitted by the sub-committee constituted under Rule 51 of the Rules of Procedure of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia;

Desiring to improve the degree of transparency in the process for Nomination of the Regional Director;

Having considered the practice followed by the World Health Organization for the nomination of the Director-General and Regional Directors,

1. DECIDES to amend Rule 49 of the Rules of Procedure of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia, by adding a new paragraph (f)(bis) to Rule 49, regarding presentations by candidates for the post of Regional Director, as contained in Annex A to this Resolution. This amendment will become effective from 1 January 2014;
2. DECIDES, with regard to such presentations, that the modalities set forth in Annex B to this Resolution shall also become effective from 1 January 2014; and
3. DECIDES that the criteria set forth in Annex C to this Resolution, should be used for assessing candidates for the post of Regional Director with immediate effect.

Annex A

Amendment to Rule 49 of the rules of procedure of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia, regarding presentations by candidates for the post of Regional Director

Rule 49, (f)(bis) The persons proposed in accordance with Paragraph (b) of this Rule shall be invited to make a presentation at a private meeting of the Committee. The presentation shall consist of an oral statement by each candidate; in addition, members of the Committee may make requests for clarifications. The Committee shall determine, as appropriate, modalities for the presentations.

Annex B

Modalities for the presentation process for the nomination of the Regional Director

1. The presentation shall be made in a private meeting of the Regional Committee.
2. The presentation shall address the candidate's analysis of current public health problems and priorities in the WHO South-East Asia Region and his/her vision on WHO's Mission and role in addressing these issues.
3. The presentation shall consist of an oral statement by each candidate not to exceed 20 minutes; in addition, members of the Committee may make requests for clarifications, not to exceed 40 minutes. The time limits shall be strictly adhered to.

Other modalities shall be determined by the Regional Committee as appropriate.

Annex C

Desired criteria for assessing candidates for the post of the Regional Director

1. A strong technical and public health background and extensive experience in global health;
2. Competency in organizational management;
3. Proven historical evidence for public health leadership;
4. Sensitiveness to cultural, social, and political differences;
5. A strong commitment to the work of WHO;
6. The good physical condition required of all staff members of the Organization;
7. Commitment to personal compliance with the WHO policy on non-recruitment of smokers or other tobacco users; and
8. Sufficient skill in the official working language of the Region.

Attachment 2

List of participants

Bangladesh

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Myanmar

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WHO

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Regional Director

Dr Poonam Khetrupal Singh
Deputy Regional Director

Ms Dianne L. Arnold
Director, Administration and Finance

Mr Bernard H. Chandra
Senior Management Adviser

HQs

Mr Steven Solomon, Principal Legal