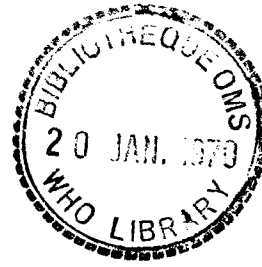




EXECUTIVE BOARD

Forty-fifth Session



COUNCIL FOR INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (CIOMS)

Note from the Director-General

This note has been prepared following a request of the Standing Committee on Administration and Finance during its discussion on the programme and budget estimates for 1971 for information on the activities and financing of CIOMS.

It may be of interest to note that the Executive Board had previously discussed relations and co-operation with CIOMS at its thirty-fifth, thirty-seventh, thirty-ninth and forty-first sessions.<sup>1</sup>

1. The objectives and structure of CIOMS

1.1 The CIOMS is an international, non-governmental organization, established in 1949 under the joint auspices of WHO and UNESCO under the title: Council for the Co-ordination of International Congresses of Medical Sciences (resolution WHA2.5). Its initial purpose was to further exchange of views and dissemination of scientific information, mainly by the co-ordination and support of international congresses in the medical sciences. The original title, which expressed too limited an activity and did not cover the real purposes of the Council, was changed in 1952 into the present one: Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences.

1.2 The objectives of CIOMS are:

- (a) to facilitate and co-ordinate the activities of the international associations members of the Council;
- (b) to act as a co-ordinating centre between the international associations and the national institutions adhering to the Council;
- (c) to maintain collaborative relations with the United Nations and its specialized agencies, in particular with WHO and UNESCO;
- (d) to promote international activities in the field of medical sciences whenever the participation of several international associations and national institutions adhering to the Council is deemed necessary; and
- (e) to serve the scientific interests of the international biomedical community in general.

<sup>1</sup> Off. Rec. Wld Hlth Org., 141, 128.  
Off. Rec. Wld Hlth Org., 149, 20, 21.  
Off. Rec. Wld Hlth Org., 158, 39, 43.  
Off. Rec. Wld Hlth Org., 166, 46, 47.

The Council is a federation of, originally, 40 international associations in the major medical disciplines. Over the years its membership has grown and, at the present time, there are 81 member organizations. There are 66 "international members" covering not only the basic disciplines of medicine but also the clinical disciplines and the social aspects of medicine. In order to strengthen the action of CIOMS, and in particular to create official and close contacts with national research centres or academies, the Council added a new category of membership, namely "national members". At the present time there are 15 national members. Other applications for membership are under consideration (list of CIOMS members is given in Annex 1).

This dual type of membership constitutes CIOMS as an organization not only representing the many health disciplines that are organized internationally, but also the international interests of national bodies concerned with the welfare of the medical sciences as a whole.

The General Assembly of CIOMS, constituted of delegates of its Member organizations, is the supreme body of the Council and meets every three years. The General Assembly determines the policy of the Council, scrutinizes and approves the budget and accounts, fixes the scale of assessments and appoints members of the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee is composed of 12 members and it meets once a year to review the activities of the Council, plan future activities, scrutinize the budget estimates, and report to the General Assembly.

The Secretariat of CIOMS is responsible for the administration in conformity with the directives of the Executive Committee. It consists of the Executive Secretary, one secretary and one typist. The Council maintains a permanent Secretariat with an office in the UNESCO building in Paris. In 1969 an office was put at its disposal on a temporary basis in the WHO building in Geneva. The Executive Secretary was then able to maintain closer contact with the WHO Secretariat in implementing collaborative activities with the Organization. If such activities are to be continued or expanded, the possibility of providing more permanent accommodation to the Secretariat of CIOMS in Geneva will have to be explored.

## 2. Activities of CIOMS

2.1 Co-ordination of international congresses: the original purpose of the Council was to co-ordinate medical congresses. This activity continues and is being achieved by:

the publication of the Calendar of International Congresses of Medical Sciences which is distributed to all constituent members and to other bodies on request. The mailing list is growing, and it is now distributed in close to 2000 copies, in English and in French. It lists international congresses scheduled over a period of three to four years and it helps organizers of future congresses to co-ordinate their meetings in time and place;

the publication of the Calendar of Regional Congresses of Medical Sciences, in view of the growing number of regional congresses of international interest;

the direct contacts of the Secretariat with the organizers of the international congresses to rationalize such meetings and to co-ordinate their place and time.

2.2 Aid to member organizations: the Secretariat provides technical advice on the planning and organization of congresses, the provision of translating services, the publication of the proceedings, etc. Grants and loans are provided to assist Member organizations in the early planning phase of congresses. It is now the policy of CIOMS increasingly to provide loans for such assistance. A Handbook on the organization and conduct of international medical congresses was published by CIOMS in 1967. It deals with practical problems related with such meetings and is currently used by the organizers of medical congresses.

2.3 Round table conferences: the Board has been kept informed that the Council has in recent years widened its activities to include symposia of a multidisciplinary character. Since 1967, the Executive Committee of CIOMS felt it more desirable to concentrate on round table conferences of general interest to the health professions and the medical community, not actually dealt with by other international organizations and which CIOMS was particularly equipped to cover. The subjects for the conferences were selected in agreement, and with the assistance of WHO. Since 1967, five such conferences were organized.

- (i) Biomedical Science and the Dilemma of Human Experimentation (UNESCO House, October 1967): the ethical problems related to research involving human subjects were discussed, as well as some legal aspects of clinical investigations, particularly in clinical tests on safety of drugs, experimental treatment of cancer, renal transplantation, experimentation in neurophysiology.
- (ii) Science Policy and Biomedical Research (UNESCO House, February 1968): the integration of biomedical research policy in the over-all planning of science and technology, problems of science policy and legislation arising from medical advances, the influence of medical sciences on man and society and the problem of the environment were discussed by the invited speakers. The report of the meeting was published by UNESCO in the series Science Policy Studies and Documents, No. 16, 1969. This report was distributed to Member States of UNESCO and Member organizations of CIOMS and it is available on request.
- (iii) Heart Transplantation (WHO headquarters, June 1968): this private conference was held at a time when heart transplantation was becoming a highly controversial subject. Immunological and clinical problems, the choice of the recipient and of the donor, the definition of the total and irreversible loss of cerebral functions in the donor were discussed and a set of conclusions were unanimously adopted by the conference and disseminated to medical journals.
- (iv) Evaluation of Drugs: Whose Responsibility? (WHO headquarters, October 1968): the responsibilities of the medical community, of the governmental agencies and of the pharmaceutical industry were discussed. In the conclusions, recommendations on the international aspects of drug evaluation were presented and, within their respective constitutional responsibilities and terms of reference, WHO and CIOMS were encouraged to continue and strengthen their activities in this area.
- (v) Medical Research: Priorities and Responsibilities (WHO headquarters, October 1969): the present trends in biomedical, clinical and public health research, the organization of medical research in some countries, the problems of medical research policy and the international aspects of medical research were discussed. Outstanding scientists, directors of medical research councils (or equivalent bodies) of several developed and developing countries, and representatives of CIOMS Member organizations participated in the conference. The provisional report was issued by the Secretariat one month after the conference. The final report will be issued as a WHO publication.

The reports of the round table conference are prepared by the Secretariat shortly after each meeting and are distributed to all CIOMS Member organizations, to WHO, UNESCO and the participants. They are also sent to interested organizations or individuals on request. The average number of copies for distribution is 300. Possibility of using WHO machinery for distribution and sales of some CIOMS reports is under consideration.

2.4 International nomenclature of diseases: since its inception CIOMS has contributed widely to the elaboration of international nomenclature by its Member organizations. The international anatomical nomenclature "Nomina Anatomica", which is now recognized and used throughout the world, may be cited as an example. In a resolution adopted by the Seventh General Assembly of CIOMS, the need for an international system of standardized nomenclature for the

whole of medicine was recognized and the establishment of a Special Committee charged with planning and ensuring its execution as a collaborative effort of Member organizations was decided. In a preliminary study, a working group which met in Florence in June 1968 recommended as a first step a project on an International Nomenclature of Diseases and the Special Committee established pursuant to the resolution of the General Assembly met in March 1969 together with representatives of WHO to set the guide lines of the project.

It was agreed that there was a need for this nomenclature to provide a method by which physicians and medical research workers throughout the world, when using a term to describe a disease, could use it in the same sense. This would simplify communication and would also facilitate the storage and retrieval of information, statistical analysis and computer operation. The languages of the nomenclature should be English, French, Russian and Spanish. Countries not using these languages could then translate the nomenclature to their own languages. The Committee recommended that the draft nomenclature should be set out providing for each morbid entity the proposed name, the synonyms, the clinical manifestations (restricted to the principal features characterizing the disease, and might where necessary include laboratory and radiological investigations), the variants, the principal complications and morbid anatomy. This information should be set out in a form suitable for computerization.

Twenty-one CIOMS Member organizations appointed experts in the various clinical disciplines for consultation on the nomenclature. A first draft for 300 diseases was circulated in August 1969. In the light of the comments and criticisms of the experts, a second draft is being prepared. It is expected that a list of 2000 disease terms will be drafted by the end of 1970. This programme is developed in close consultation with, and supported by, WHO.

2.5 WHO/CIOMS Liaison Committee for Immunology: the purpose of this committee is to collect and disseminate information on international and national scientific meetings and courses on immunology in order to provide co-ordination machinery in this expanding field. As a result, a periodical Newsletter is issued by CIOMS and widely disseminated.

2.6 In view of the financial position of CIOMS, some other activities, namely, assistance to young research workers and post-graduate courses, have now been discontinued.

### 3. Relations with UNESCO

UNESCO ended its annual subvention to CIOMS in 1965 and the following statement was made by the representative of UNESCO at the Seventh General Assembly of CIOMS in 1967:

"UNESCO's interest in an international organization of medical sciences might be questioned and of course in many respects there are more natural and close links in our sister organization, WHO, for CIOMS. It appears to me that CIOMS might play a similar role in its relations with WHO as the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) does to UNESCO.<sup>1</sup> There is, however, no clear-cut distinction between the different branches of modern sciences and there are also social and educational aspects of medicine which are related to UNESCO's programme." (Record of the Seventh General Assembly, page 14.)

UNESCO has collaborated actively in the round table conferences especially those on matters related to the UNESCO programme. UNESCO is still providing office facilities for the CIOMS Secretariat in its building in Paris.

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<sup>1</sup> UNESCO supports the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) for its activities in the natural sciences by an annual subvention.

4. Relations with WHO

Co-operation between WHO and CIOMS became even closer as the Council undertook important activities related directly to the work of the Organization. In recent years, CIOMS has been dealing with matters of great interest to the health professions - such as human experimentation, heart transplantation, drug evaluation, nomenclature of diseases and policy in medical research. In these endeavours, CIOMS is particularly well-qualified because its Member organizations represent not only international unions and societies in the biomedical field, but also national bodies responsible for medical research. Its general assembly and its Executive Committee include outstanding scientists, whose collective views are of the utmost interest and value to WHO.

Continued contact at the technical level between the WHO and CIOMS secretariats avoids any overlapping and creates a unique possibility to respond to some needs of the health professions and the biomedical scientific community. The future activities of CIOMS are being periodically considered by its Executive Committee at whose sessions WHO is always represented. This close working contact between WHO and CIOMS ascertains full co-ordination and a successful realization of the programmes undertaken.

5. Financial situations

The financial situation of CIOMS during the period 1965-1968 was as follows:

INCOME

	1 <u>from WHO</u>	2 <u>from UNESCO</u>	3 <u>Membership fees, etc.</u>	4 TOTAL
1965	20 000	\$ 11 000	26 238.94	57 238.94
1966	20 000	-	28 976.98	48 976.98
1967	20 000	10 000	25 090.62	55 090.62
1968	20 000 <sup>1</sup>	400	23 717.20	44 117.20

Under column 3, respective amounts income from members, royalties from publications, refund from congresses and interests.

EXPENDITURE

The respective expenditure for the period 1965-1968 was:

	<u>1965</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>1967</u>	<u>1968</u>
Execution of the programme, including salaries, publications, etc.	\$ 37 386.09	35 668.36	37 077.85	30 515.55
CIOMS meetings, including round table conferences	5 468.85	5 442.40	8 757.13	7 046.13
Assistance to Member organizations	12 197.22	11 392.06	11 636.30	7 833.72
Others, including audit fees, office equipment, etc.	2 029.92	1 244.33	1 238.79	553.75
TOTAL	<u>57 082.08</u>	<u>53 747.15</u>	<u>58 710.07</u>	<u>45 949.15</u>

The account for 1969 is not yet available

<sup>1</sup> Under a contractual technical service agreement signed between WHO and CIOMS in December 1968, CIOMS was granted an additional sum of \$ 16 000 as a contribution to the programme on the International Nomenclature of Diseases, to cover the periods 1969 to 1970, when the programme will be completed.

For 1970, it is expected that UNESCO will grant \$ 5000 as a contribution for a round table conference on a subject to be selected in consultation with WHO.

It is evident that the budgetary resources of CIOMS are limited. Moreover, it cannot be expected that member associations will contribute more in the future. Most of such associations have themselves very limited resources and some find it difficult to maintain their contribution at the present level.

#### 6. Conclusion

The expanding scope of interest of CIOMS in the medical sciences, the development of its ongoing activities as well as the emphasis it has laid, during recent years, on scientific and ethical problems of major importance in the health field, illustrate the contribution to WHO, by a non-governmental organization, which it helped to create and which, in the view of the Director-General, it should continue to support.

LIST OF CIOMS MEMBERS AS AT 1.1.1970

INTERNATIONAL MEMBERS

International Association of Allergology  
International Federation of Anatomists  
World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesiologists  
International Union of Angiology  
International Society of Audiology  
International Union of Biochemistry  
International Association for Prevention of Blindness  
International Union against Cancer  
International Society of Cardiology  
International Cardiovascular Society  
World Association of Anatomic and Clinical Pathology Societies  
Permanent International Committee of Comparative Pathology Congresses  
International Society of Criminology  
International Dental Federation  
International League of Dermatological Societies  
International Diabetes Federation  
International Society for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled  
International Federation of Societies for Electroencephalography and  
Clinical Neurophysiology  
International Federation for Medical and Biological Engineering  
International Epidemiological Association  
Exotic Pathology Society  
World Organization of Gastroenterology  
International Society of Geographical Pathology  
International Association of Gerontology  
International Union for Health Education  
International Society of Internal Medicine  
International Academy of Legal Medicine and of Social Medicine  
International Leprosy Association  
International Society of Lymphology  
World Medical Association  
World Federation for Mental Health  
International Association of Microbiological Societies  
International Congress of Neurology  
World Federation of Neurology  
International Society of Neuropathology  
International Federation of Ophthalmological Societies  
International Society of Orthopaedic Surgery and Traumatology  
International Federation of Oto-Rhino-Laryngological Societies  
International Paediatric Association  
International Academy of Pathology  
International Federation of Physical Medicine  
International Union of Physiological Sciences  
World Psychiatric Association  
International Society of Art and Psychopathology  
International League against Rheumatism  
International Rhinologic Society

Annex 1

International College of Surgeons  
International Society of Surgery  
International Union of Therapeutics  
International Society of Blood Transfusion  
International Congresses of Tropical Medicine and Malaria  
International Union against Tuberculosis  
International Union against the Venereal Diseases and the Treponematoses  
World Veterinary Association  
Medical Women's International Association

NATIONAL MEMBERS

Argentina: Consejo nacional de Investigaciones Cientificas y Tecnicas  
Belgium: Comité des Académies royales de médecine  
Bulgaria: Union des Associations Médicales Scientifiques de Bulgarie  
Canada: Medical Research Council  
Czechoslovakia: Ceskoslovenska Lekarska Spolecnost J.E. Purkyně  
Denmark: Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab  
France: Académie nationale de médecine  
Hungary: Magyar Orvostudom'anyi T'arsas'agok és Egyesuletek  
Szovetsege (MOTESZ)  
Israel: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities  
Principality of Monaco: Centre scientifique de Monaco  
Netherlands: Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen  
Romania: Union des Sociétés des Sciences médicales de la République  
socialiste de Roumanie  
South Africa: South African Council for Scientific and Industrial Research  
Switzerland: Académie suisse des sciences médicales  
United States of America: National Academy of Sciences - National  
Research Council

ASSOCIATED MEMBERS

European Society of Cardiology  
American College of Chest Physicians  
International Society for Clinical Electrorretinography  
International Society for Normal and Abnormal Ethnopsychology  
International Society of History of Medicine  
International Association of Hydatid Diseases  
International Committee of Military Medicine and Pharmacy  
International Union of Nutritional Sciences  
Asia Pacific Academy of Ophthalmology  
International Federation of Medical Student Associations  
Transplantation Society