

WHA31.13 Documentation and languages of the Health Assembly and the Executive Board ¹

The Thirty-first World Health Assembly,

Having considered resolution EB60.R7 of the Executive Board and the report of the Board's Ad Hoc Committee on Documentation and Languages of the Health Assembly and the Executive Board; ²

I

Recognizing that the concept of official languages in WHO relates at present to interpretation of speeches made in those languages, whereas the concept of working languages relates essentially to translation and is applied on a pragmatic basis, taking into account the specific requirements of Member States, the Health Assembly and the Executive Board;

DECIDES:

- (1) that, as regards the official languages of the Health Assembly and the Executive Board, the present practice, whereby interpretation from and into those languages is on the basis of complete parity, should be maintained;
- (2) that Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish shall continue to be the working languages, the practices and decisions extending or limiting their use in varying degrees being allowed to remain, except for any further modifications which may result from agreements negotiated between the governments concerned and the Organization;

II

Conscious of the need to cut out all avoidable and non-essential expenditure in accordance with resolution WHA29.48;

Being informed that certain savings could be achieved by issuing in nonserial form the volumes that at present form the *Official Records* series, since this would make possible a less extensive free distribution outside the Organization;

Convinced that the issue of a number of separate volumes would fulfil the same purpose as the *Official Records* series, and would continue to meet the needs of Member States;

DECIDES:

- (1) that the present *Official Records* series shall be replaced by a number of separate volumes;
- (2) that Rule 95 of the Rules of Procedure of the Health Assembly shall be amended by the deletion of the words: “in the *Official Records* of the Organization”;

III

1. DECIDES in 1979 and future years to maintain the *status quo* regarding the translation and publication of the verbatim records of the Health Assembly and the summary records of the Executive Board and the main committees of the Health Assembly;
2. INVITES the Director-General, in future years, to take the necessary measures to comply with the above provisions, giving due consideration to resolution WHA29.48.