



**World Health
Organization**

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR **Africa**

AFR/RC71/Decision 1

6 July 2021

REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Seventy-first session

Virtual session, 24–26 August 2021

**DRAFT DECISION ON THE SPECIAL PROCEDURES TO REGULATE THE CONDUCT
OF THE VIRTUAL SESSION OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE**

The Seventy-first session of the Regional Committee for Africa,

1. **ADOPTS** the special procedures to regulate the conduct of the virtual Regional Committee as set out in Annex 1 to this decision; and
2. **DECIDES** that the said special procedures shall apply to the Seventy-first session of the Regional Committee for Africa to be held from 24 to 26 August 2021.

Annex 1

Special procedures to regulate the conduct of the virtual session of the Regional Committee for Africa

RULES OF PROCEDURE

1. The Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee for Africa shall continue to apply in full, except to the extent that they are inconsistent with these special procedures, in which case the Regional Committee's decision to adopt these special procedures shall operate as a decision to suspend the relevant Rules of Procedure to the extent necessary in accordance with Rule 53 of the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee for Africa.¹

ATTENDANCE AND QUORUM

2. Attendance by Member States, Associate Members, committees of the United Nations and its specialized agencies and other regional international organizations and economic communities having interests in common with the World Health Organization, as well as nongovernmental organizations shall be through a secured access to videoconference or other electronic means allowing representatives to hear other participants and to address the meeting remotely.

3. For the avoidance of doubt, virtual attendance of representatives of Member States and Associate Members shall be taken into account when calculating the presence of a quorum.

ADDRESSING THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE

4. Member States and Associate Members, committees of the United Nations and its specialized agencies and other regional international organizations and economic communities having interests in common with the World Health Organization, as well as nongovernmental organizations are invited to provide, in advance of the opening of the Regional Committee, written statements of no more than 600 words in one of the official languages of the African Region, which will be posted on the Regional Office website.

5. Heads of Member State and Associate Member delegations shall also have the opportunity, if they so wish, to submit pre-recorded video statements of no more than three minutes in duration in advance of the opening of the session, if possible, by Friday 20 August 2021. Those video statements will be broadcast at the virtual meeting in lieu of a live intervention.

6. Written and video statements, in the language of submission, shall remain posted on the Regional Office website until the adoption of the final report of the Regional Committee, which will reflect the debate in accordance with the usual practice.

¹ This will affect notably the relevant provisions of the following Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee for Africa:

- Rule 3 (Credentials);
- Rule 20 (Final Report);
- Rules 45, 48 through 51 (voting by show of hands and secret ballot);
- Rule 54 (amendments of and addition to the Rules of Procedure) insofar as these Special Procedures may be regarded as amendments of or addition to the Rules of Procedure and to the extent that Rule 54 requires receipt and consideration of a report thereon by an appropriate subcommittee.

7. During the virtual session, Member States, Associate Members, committees of the United Nations and its specialized agencies and other regional international organizations and economic communities having interests in common with the World Health Organization, as well as nongovernmental organizations shall be provided with the opportunity to take the floor. Statements will be limited to three minutes for Member States and Associate members. Statements by committees of the United Nations and its specialized agencies and other regional international organizations and economic communities and nongovernmental organizations shall be limited to one minute. Any representative wishing to take the floor should signal their wish to speak through the tools made available by the online platform.

COMMITTEES

8. All business shall be conducted in plenary. Accordingly, the Committee on Credentials shall not be established. Credentials shall be considered as set out below.

REGISTRATION AND CREDENTIALS

9. Online registration will follow normal practice. Guidance for the online registration is included under the relevant section.

10. In accordance with Rule 3, the names of representatives, including all alternates, advisers and secretaries which shall take the form of credentials issued by Heads of State, Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Ministers of Health or any other appropriate authority shall be communicated electronically to the Regional Director, if possible no later than 20 August 2021. Given the need to facilitate virtual access to the meeting, all credentials and lists of representatives, including all alternates, advisers and secretaries, should be submitted electronically.

11. The Chairperson of the Regional Committee having assessed, before the opening and during the Seventy-first session, whether credentials of representatives including all alternates, advisers and secretaries are in conformity with the requirements of the Rules of Procedure, shall report to the Regional Committee accordingly at the opening and at any given time as may be needed with a view to the Regional Committee making a decision thereon.

MEETINGS

12. All meetings of the Regional Committee shall be held in public. The virtual Regional Committee shall be broadcast on the Regional Office website.

DECISION-MAKING

13. All decisions of the Regional Committees taken in virtual session should as far as possible be by consensus. In any event, given the virtual nature of the session, no decision shall be taken by a show of hands vote or by secret ballot.

LANGUAGES

14. For the avoidance of doubt, Rule 23 continues to apply, whereby speeches made in an official language shall be interpreted into the other official languages.

CONSIDERATION OF INFORMATION DOCUMENTS

15. Information documents will be considered through Written Statements which will be published on the Regional Office website. Written statements on the Information Documents shall be sent electronically to the Secretariat at the following email address afgorcregistration@who.int before the first day of the Regional Committee

FINAL REPORT

16. Following the closure of the session, the Secretariat shall prepare and share electronically a draft final report for consideration of and comments from the representatives of Member States and Associate Members. Comments shall be sent electronically to the Secretariat at the following email address afgorcregistration@who.int not later than fourteen days from the date of dispatch of the draft final report. The Secretariat, following consultations with the Chairperson of the Regional Committee, shall finalize the final report and publish it on the Regional Office website.