



REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA

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METHOD OF WORK AND DURATION OF THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

Report of the Regional Director

Executive Summary

This document is designed to facilitate the work of the Fifty-ninth World Health Assembly, in accordance with the relevant decisions of the Executive Board and the World Health Assembly concerning the method of work and duration of the Health Assembly. The Regional Committee is hereby invited to examine the document and advise on the draft procedural decisions. Decisions taken will be transmitted to the Director-General.

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FIFTY-EIGHTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

1. The Fifty-eighth World Health Assembly lasted six (6) days.
2. The agenda of the Fifty-eighth World Health Assembly was heavy and discussions were intense. In all, the Health Assembly adopted 34 resolutions and two decisions.
3. Dr Jong-wook Lee, WHO Director-General, in his opening address, reported on the global health challenges confronting the world. He said that the increasing support being received from world leaders requires greater coordination to improve the effectiveness of interventions. Other invited speakers were Ms Ann Veneman, the newly-appointed Executive Director of UNICEF; His Excellency Mr Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, President of the Republic of Maldives; and Mr Bill Gates, co-founder of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.
4. The main technical agenda items included the revision of the International Health Regulations; health action in relation to crises and disasters, with special emphasis on earthquakes and tsunamis; malaria control; strengthening pandemic influenza preparedness and response; sustainable health financing for tuberculosis prevention and control; global immunization strategy; achievement of health-related millennium development goals; cancer prevention and control; disability, including prevention, management and rehabilitation; public health problems caused by harmful use of alcohol; international plan of action on ageing: report on implementation; international migration of health personnel: a challenge for health systems in developing countries; ehealth; containment of antimicrobial resistance; sustainable health financing, universal coverage and social health insurance; enhancement of laboratory biosafety; infant and young child nutrition; and the Ministerial Summit on Health Research. Each agenda item was supported with a resolution, including a resolution on sustaining the elimination of iodine-deficiency disorders.
5. The adoption of the International Health Regulations (2005) represented a major public-health achievement. In addition, the re-introduction of international migration of health personnel as a substantive agenda item has increased the influence of African Region delegates in orienting the direction of global health.
6. Five resolutions were passed concerning the internal auditor, financial matters, the real estate fund, staffing matters, establishment of World Blood Donor Day, implementation of multilingualism in WHO, and collaboration within the United Nations system and with other intergovernmental organizations. Two of these resolutions were related to the unaudited WHO accounts for 2004 and the assessments for 2006–2007.
7. The request from Taiwan to be granted observer status at the World Health Assembly was dismissed by the Health Assembly.

METHOD OF WORK AND DURATION OF THE FIFTY-NINTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

8. It was proposed to convene the Fifty-ninth World Health Assembly on Monday, 22 May 2006 at the *Palais des Nations*, Geneva, and to close it no later than Saturday, 27 May 2006.

9. In line with Resolution WHA52.21 on the reform of the World Health Assembly by which the Director-General is requested to make appropriate arrangements for a shortened plenary meeting, delegates at the Health Assembly will be:

- (a) requested to limit, to five minutes, their statements in such debates;
- (b) encouraged to make group or regional statements;
- (c) invited to submit written statements of not more than 600 words for inclusion in the verbatim records of the plenary meeting in lieu of taking the floor.

10. Delegates wishing to have their names placed on the list of speakers for the general discussion should notify the WHO Governing Bodies Department in advance, sending their notification to fax number 41 22 791 41 73.

11. Copies of statements to be made during the general discussion should be submitted to the Office of the Assistant to the Secretary of the Health Assembly by the morning of 22 May 2006.

12. The theme for World Health Day 2006 will be "Human resources for health".

Credentials

13. The credentials of delegates, alternates and advisers should be delivered to the Secretariat (Governing Bodies Department) **by 1st May 2006**. Credentials shall be issued by the Head of State, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Health, or any other appropriate authority. Member States shall be represented at the Assembly by not more than three (3) delegates. Alternates and advisers may accompany delegates. Only original documents are examined and considered for formal credentials by the Committee on Credentials. Faxes and e-mails are not considered as formal credentials but may be sent to the Governing Bodies Department (fax: + 41 22 791 41 73; e-mail: credentials@who.int) for advance information prior to delivery of the original document. Credentials should include the following information for each participant: LAST NAME (in capital letters), first name, title, function, institution, city, gender (unless indicated in title).

Travel expenses for least developed countries

14. Resolution WHA 50.1 provides that only Member States that are classified as least developed countries by the United Nations shall be reimbursed for the actual travel expenses of one delegate each. In accordance with WHO policy, tickets will be provided only for travel by the most direct route. As was the practice in 2005, qualifying delegates from the African Region will be encouraged to have their tickets purchased for them by the WHO country offices before departure.

Vice-President of the World Health Assembly

15. The chairman of the fifty-fifth session of the Regional Committee, in accordance with Decision 6 (2) of the thirty-third session of the Regional Committee for Africa, will be proposed for the office of President of the Fifty-ninth World Health Assembly. If for any reason the Chairman of the Regional Committee is unable to assume office, one of the Vice-Chairmen will do so in the order originally chosen by lot, first and second Vice-Chairman.

MEMBER STATES ENTITLED TO DESIGNATE PERSONS TO SERVE ON THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Executive Board

16. It is proposed to convene the one-hundred-and-seventeenth session of the Executive Board on Monday, 23 January 2006, at WHO headquarters, Geneva, and to close the session no later than Saturday, 28 January 2006.

17. The Executive Board consists of 32 persons designated by as many Member States. The African Region has seven (7) members on the Board. The term of office of each Member is three (3) years; that is, each Member will serve for six (6) Board meetings. New members are elected during the World Health Assembly, and the term of office starts at the Executive Board session which immediately follows that Health Assembly and ends after the closing of the third consecutive Health Assembly at which the Member is replaced.

Member States entitled to designate persons to serve on the Executive Board from May 2005

18. The fifty-fourth session of the Regional Committee for Africa held from 30 August to 3 September, 2004 by Decision 8 decided that for the purpose of ensuring a geographical balance of Member States from the African Region serving on the Board, the Regional Membership should be divided into three subregions: Subregion I, Subregion II and Subregion III, corresponding to the African Region's geographical groupings. Each subregion is allocated two seats out of the seven to which the Region is entitled. The seventh seat will rotate among the subregions.

19. Following the new arrangements and in accordance with Decision 9(4) and Resolution AFR/RC54/R11(2) of the fifty-fourth session of the Regional Committee for Africa, Liberia (I), Rwanda (II), Madagascar (III) and Namibia (III, rotating seat) each designated a representative to serve on the Executive Board starting with the one-hundred-and-sixteenth session, immediately after the Fifty-eighth World Health Assembly, joining Guinea-Bissau, Kenya and Lesotho.

20. The term of office of Guinea-Bissau will end with the closing of the Fifty-ninth World Health Assembly. In accordance with Decision 8 and Resolution AFR/RC54/R11 of the fifty-fourth session of the Regional Committee for Africa, designating Members to serve on the Executive Board, Guinea-Bissau will be replaced by Mali from Subregion I.

21. Mali will attend the one-hundred-and-eighteenth session of the Executive Board in May 2006 and should confirm availability at least six (6) weeks before the Fifty-ninth World Health Assembly.

22. The Fifty-first World Health Assembly decided by Resolution WHA51.26 that the persons designated to serve on the Executive Board should be government representatives technically qualified in the field of health.

Credentials

23. The credentials of the delegate and alternate shall be issued by the Head of State, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Health, or any other appropriate authority. Member

States shall be represented at the Executive Board by not more than one (1) delegate. Alternates and advisers may accompany delegates. Only original documents are examined and considered for formal credentials and should be delivered to the Secretariat (Governing Bodies Department) **by Tuesday 23 May 2006**. Credentials should include the following information for each participant: LAST NAME (in capital letters), first name, title, function, institution, gender (unless indicated in title).

MAIN COMMITTEES OF THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

Terms of reference and members

24. The Thirty-first World Health Assembly, by its Resolution WHA31.1, decided that:

- (a) the terms of reference of Committee A shall be:
 - (i) to deal primarily with programme and budget matters;
 - (ii) to review the proposed programme budget and the Executive Board's report thereon;
 - (iii) to recommend the budget level and the appropriation resolution;
 - (iv) to consider the tentative budgetary projections for the following biennium and study such other items as shall be referred to it by the World Health Assembly (Rule 34);
- (b) the terms of reference of Committee B shall be:
 - (i) to deal primarily with administrative, financial and legal matters;
 - (ii) to review WHO's financial position, including the Financial Report and the Report of the External Auditors; the status of contributions and advances to the Working Capital Fund; the status of any funds that have a bearing on WHO's financial position; and consideration of the amount of available casual income to be used to help finance the budget;
 - (iii) to recommend the scale of assessment;
 - (iv) to study such other items as shall be referred to it by the World Health Assembly.

25. The Chairmen of these Main Committees shall be elected by the World Health Assembly after consideration of the Report of the Committee on Nominations.

26. Each Main Committee shall, after consideration of the report of the Committee on Nominations, elect two Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur.

27. Annex 2 to this report, prepared for the information of members of the Committee on Nominations, shows the distribution by country of office-bearers at earlier Health Assemblies.

28. The Director-General, in consultation with the Regional Director, shall consider for nomination before the Fifty-ninth World Health Assembly, delegates of Member States of the African Region who may serve effectively as:

- (a) Vice-Chairman of Main Committee B;
- (b) Rapporteur of Committee A.

Formal meeting of the Regional Committee

29. Before the opening of the Fifty-ninth World Health Assembly, the Regional Director will convene a formal meeting of the Regional Committee on Saturday, **20 May 2006**, at 9.30 a.m. at the WHO headquarters, Geneva, to confirm the decisions taken by the Regional Committee at its fifty-fifth session and discuss agenda items of the Fifty-ninth World Health Assembly of specific interest to the African Region. During the World Health Assembly, coordination meetings of the African delegates will be held every morning at 8.00 a.m. in the *Palais des Nations*, Geneva.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

30. In accordance with Executive Board Resolution EB99.R28, the World Health Assembly, by its Resolution WHA50.18, operative paragraph 2(1) decided that the Executive Board, when preparing the provisional agenda of each World Health Assembly, shall normally include individual technical programme items in that agenda as separate items only in the years when the World Health Assembly does not undertake a full review of the proposed biennial programme budget, thus allowing more time for discussing such technical items.

ANNEX 1

PRESIDENTS OF THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

Assembly	Year	President	Country
Thirtieth	1977	Dr S. Tapa	Tonga
Thirty-first	1978	M.K. Mohammed	Trinidad and Tobago
Thirty-second	1979	Professor P. Tuchinda	Thailand
Thirty-third	1980	Dr A. R. Al-Awadi	Kuwait
Thirty-fourth	1981	Dr Néropi Violaki-Paraskeva	Greece
Thirty-fifth	1982	M.M. Diop	Senegal
Thirty-sixth	1983	M. Tansri Chong Hon Nyan	Malaysia
Thirty-seventh	1984	Dr G. Soberon Acevedo	Mexico
Thirty-eighth	1985	Dr S. Surjaningrat	Indonesia
Thirty-ninth	1986	Dr Z. Hamzeh	Jordan
Fortieth	1987	Dr J. Van Londen	The Netherlands
Forty-first	1988	Dr Ngandu-Kabeya Dibandala	DRC
Forty-second	1989	Professor Minzhang Chen	China
Forty-third	1990	Dr P. Naranjo	Equador
Forty-fourth	1991	Dr P. Nymadawa	Mongolia
Forty-fifth	1992	M.A. Al-Badi	UAE
Forty-sixth	1993	M.C. Ortendahl	Sweden
Forty-seventh	1994	M.B.K. Temane	Botswana
Forty-eighth	1995	Dato Dr Haji Johar Noordin	Brunei Darussalaam
Forty-ninth	1996	Dr A.J. Mazza	Argentina
Fiftieth	1997	M. Saleem I. Shervani	India
Fifty-first	1998	Dr F.R. Al-Mousawi	Bahrain
Fifty-second	1999	Maria de Belen Roseira	Portugal
Fifty-third	2000	Dr. Libertina Amathila	Namibia
Fifty-fourth	2001	Dr Hong Sun Huot	Cambodia
Fifty-fifth	2002	Dr J.F. López Beltrán	El Salvador
Fifty-sixth	2003	Dr Khandaker Mosharrif Hossain	Bangladesh
Fifty-seventh	2004	Mr Mohammed Nasir Khan	Pakistan
Fifty-eighth	2005	Ms S Salgado	Spain

ANNEX 2

**DISTRIBUTION BY COUNTRY OF FUNCTIONS DURING
PRECEDING ASSEMBLIES**

**RÉPARTITION PAR PAYS DES FONCTIONS EXERCÉES
AU COURS DES ASSEMBLÉES PRÉCÉDENTES**

The attached table provides information, by type of function, for each of the previous Assemblies.

Le tableau ci-joint donne les informations par type de fonctions, pour chacune des Assemblées précédentes.

TABLE/TABLEAU

	WHA47 47ème Assemblée 1994	WHA48 48ème Assemblée 1995	WHA49 49ème Assemblée 1996	WHA50 50ème Assemblée 1997
Président President	Botswana	Brunéi Darussalam	Argentine	Inde
Vice-Présidents Vice-Presidents	Rep. démocratique populaire lao Égypte Thaïlande Slovénie Argentine	Burkina Faso Mexique Iran Biélorus Myanmar	Gabon Qatar Bulgarie Sri Lanka Fidji	Algérie Venezuela Libye Portugal Chine
Chairmen of Main Committees Présidents des Commissions principales	Indonésie, Com. "A" Arabie Saoudite, Com. "B"	Tanzanie, Com. "A" Pologne, Com. "B"	Pays-Bas, Com. "A" Afrique du Sud, Com. "B"	Belize, Com "A" Kiribati, Com "B"
Other members of the General Committee Autres membres du Bureau de l'Assemblée	Bahrain Burkina Faso Cap-Vert Chine Cuba France Gabon Guatemala Guinée Iran Israël Japon Nigéria Fédération de Russie Royaume-Uni de Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord États-Unis d'Amérique Venezuela	Bolivie Botswana Chine Cuba France Indonésie Japon Kenya Malawi Maroc Mozambique Oman Panama Fédération de Russie Émirats Arabes Unis Royaume-Uni de grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord États-Unis d'Amérique	Australie Canada Chine Croatie Cuba Équateur France Liban Mali Nigéria Oman Fédération de Russie Thaïlande Royaume-Uni de Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord États-Unis d'Amérique Zaïre Zambie	Argentine Bulgarie Côte d'Ivoire Cuba Érythrée France Japon Maroc Mozambique Myanmar Fédération de Russie Seychelles Afrique du Sud Suède Émirats Arabes Unis Royaume-Uni de Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord États-Unis d'Amérique
Vice-Chairmen of Main Committees Vice-Présidents des Commissions principales	Belgique, Singapour Com. "A" Mexique, République centrafricaine Com."B"	Maroc, Iles Salomon, Com."A" Inde, Honduras, Com. "B"	El Salvador, Philippines, Com. "A" Bangladesh, Koweït, Com. "B"	Tunisie, Maurice, Com. "A" Fédération de Russie, Nepal, Com. "B"
Rapporteurs of Main Committees Rapporteurs des Commissions principales	Iraq, Com. "A" Papouasie Nouvelle- Guinée, Com. "B"	Luxembourg, Com. "A" Égypte, Com. "B"	Bhoutan, Com. "A" Hongrie, Com. "B"	Suisse, Com. "A" Liban, Com. "B"

	WHA51 51ème Assemblée 1998	WHA52 52ème Assemblée 1999	WHA53 53ème Assemblée 2000	WHA54 54ème Assemblée 2001
Président President	Bahrain	Portugal	Namibie	Cambodge
Vice-Présidents Vice-Presidents	Afrique du Sud République dominicaine Azerbaïdjan Bhoutan États fédérés de Micronésie	Bangladesh Jamaïque Jamahiriya arabe libyenne Samoa Zimbabwe	Australie Haïti Koweït Inde Ouzbékistan	Burkina Faso Nicaragua Pakistan Biélorus République pop. démocratique de Corée
Chairmen of Main Committees Présidents des Commissions principales	Nouvelle Zélande, Com. "A" Sri Lanka, Com. "B"	Oman, Com "A" Mexique, Com "B"	Bangladesh, Com. "A" Liban , Com. "B"	Kenya, Com. "A" Islande, Com. "B"
Other members of the General Committee Autres membres du Bureau de l'Assemblée	Argentine Biélorus Burundi Chine Cuba Chypre France Guinée-Bissau Jamaïque Liban Niger Fédération de Russie Sierra Leone Espagne Ouganda Royaume-Uni de Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord États-Unis d'Amérique	Argentine Benin Burkina Faso Cape-Vert Chine Cuba France Israël Japon Kenya Liban Lituanie Fédération de Russie Sri Lanka Royaume-Uni de Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord États-Unis d'Amérique Zambie	Bosnie-Herzégovine Burkina Faso Cap-Vert Canada Chine Chine Cuba France Allemagne Ghana Lesotho Oman Palaos Fédération de Russie Afrique du Sud Royaume-Uni de Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord États-Unis d'Amérique Uruguay	Bahrain Bhoutan Bolivie Chine Cuba République démocratique du Congo Dominique France Guinée Bissau Iran (Rép. Islamique d') Japon Mali Niger Fédération de Russie Suède Royaume-Uni de Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord États-Unis d'Amérique
Vice-Chairmen of Main Committees Vice-Présidents des Commissions principales	Danemark, Népal, Com. "A" Guinée équatoriale Venezuela, Com. "B"	Ghana, Malaisie, Com. "A" Bhoutan, Finlande, Com "B"	Nicaragua, Malte, Com. "A" Algérie, Fidji , Com. "B"	Émirats Arabes Unis, Palaos, Com. "A" Bahamas Swaziland, Com. "B"
Rapporteurs of Main Committees Rapporteurs des Commissions principales	Pakistan, Com. "A" Rép. tchèque Com. "B"	Kazakstan , Com. "A" Tchad, Com. "B"	Madagascar, Com. "A" Thaïlande, Com. "B"	Swaziland

	WHA55 55ème Assemblée 2002	WHA56 56ème Assemblée 2003	WHA57 57ème Assemblée 2004
Président President	El Salvador	Bangladesh	Pakistan
Vice-Présidents Vice-Presidents	Botswana Ukraine Népal Kiribati Oman	Cameroun Bolivie Jordanie Allemagne	Afrique du Sud Bulgarie Grenade Malaisie Timor-Leste
Chairmen of Main Committees Présidents des Commissions principales	Ireland Senegal	Canada Fidji	République démocratique Populaire du Laos, Com. "A" Bhoutan, Can "B"
Other members of the General Committee Autres membres du Bureau de l'Assemblée	Barbades Chine Côte d'Ivoire Cuba République populaire et démocratique de Corée France Japon Mexique Maroc Fédération de Russie Rwanda Sao Tomé et Príncipe Sierra Leone Espagne Emirats Arabes Unis Royaume-Uni de Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord États-Unis d'Amérique	Algérie Bahraïm Burundi Chine Cuba France Ghana Grèce Inde Iran (Islamic Republic) Jamaïque Lesotho Poland Russian Federation Royaume-Uni de Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord Tanzanie États-Unis d'Amérique	Botswana Chili Chine (Rep. Popol.) Cuba Etats-Unis d'Amérique Fédération de Russie France Irlande Jamahiriya arabeliyenne Kazakhstan Liberia Niger Nigeria Royaume-Uni de Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord Tchad Trinité- et- Tabago Yemen
Vice-Chairmen of Main Committees Vice-Présidents des Commissions principales	Brésil Inde Tunisie Viet Nam	Benin Maroc Roumanie République populaire et démocratique de Corée	Saint-Vincent-et-les-Grenadines, Pays-Bas, Com. "A" République Centrafrrique, Jordanie, Can . "B"
Rapporteurs of Main Committees Rapporteurs des Commissions principales	Comores Indonesie	Czech Republic Venezuela	Bengladesh, Can "A" Hongrie, Can "B"

	WHA58 58ème Assemblée 2005	WHA59 59ème Assemblée 2006	WHA60 60ème Assemblée 2007
Président President	Spain		
Vice-Présidents Vice-Presidents	Eritrea, New Zealand, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay		
Chairmen of Main Committees Présidents des Commissions principales	Iran (A), Barbados (B)		
Other members of the General Committee Autres membres du Bureau de l'Assemblée	Bhutan, Brazil, China, Congo, Cuba, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, France, Lebanon, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malawi, Mongolia, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Zimbabwe		
Vice-Chairmen of Main Committees Vice-Présidents des Commissions principales	Malawi, Brunei Darussalam (A), Portugal, Bangladesh (B)		
Rapporteurs of Main Committees Rapporteurs des Commissions principales	Malta (A), Bangladesh (B)		