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## **Twenty-third Standing Committee of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe – report of the fifth session**

This document contains the report of the fifth and final session of the Twenty-third Standing Committee of the Regional Committee for Europe (SCRC), held in Copenhagen, Denmark, on 11 September 2016, before the opening of the 66th session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe. This document should be read in conjunction with the consolidated report on the work of the Twenty-third SCRC (document EUR/RC66/4).

## Introduction

1. The Twenty-third Standing Committee of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe (SCRC) held its fifth and final session at UN City, Copenhagen, Denmark, on Sunday, 11 September 2016, the day before the opening of the 66th session of the Regional Committee for Europe (RC66).
2. In her introductory remarks, the Regional Director commended the participation by members of the Twenty-third SCRC in teleconferences held since the previous session. Documentation for RC66 had been finalized and uploaded to the WHO Regional Office for Europe's website more or less on time. Registration of participants had been completed the previous week, and nearly 390 persons were expected to attend the session, with many high-level delegations.

## Provisional agenda and provisional programme of RC66

3. The Regional Director presented the provisional programme of RC66 (document EUR/RC66/3 Rev.1), noting that both the formal agenda (document EUR/RC66/2 Rev.1) and the informal events (such as ministerial lunches and technical briefings) constituted a heavy but manageable "workload" for the Regional Committee.
4. On Monday, 12 September 2016, after the opening of the session and election of its officers, Her Royal Highness The Crown Princess of Denmark would deliver an address. The Regional Director would then deliver a substantial address and report on the work of the Regional Office (document EUR/RC66/5).
5. The Regional Director's statement and report would be debated later in the morning, to be followed by a statement by Mr Christian Friis Bach, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, on behalf of the United Nations Regional Coordination Mechanism for Europe and Central Asia.
6. The report of the Twenty-third SCRC (documents EUR/RC66/4 and EUR/RC66/4 Add.1) and the Minsk Declaration on the Life-course Approach in the Context of Health 2020 would be discussed in the early part of Monday afternoon, while the day would close with consideration of provisional agenda item 3, Matters arising from resolutions and decisions of the World Health Assembly and the Executive Board (document EUR/RC66/6), with a presentation by a representative of Sweden, the country currently serving as the link between the Executive Board and the Standing Committee. That agenda item would be taken up jointly with certain elements of agenda item 5(l), namely, the Framework of engagement with non-State actors, issues resulting from the Open-ended Intergovernmental Meeting on Governance Reform, and managerial reforms (especially those related to accountability and compliance).
7. Member States had expressed considerable interest in the provisional programme for the morning of Tuesday, 13 September, which comprised a discussion of the midterm progress reports on implementation of Health 2020 (document EUR/RC66/16) and of the European Action Plan for Strengthening Public Health Capacities and Services (document EUR/RC66/19), as well as the place of health in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (document EUR/RC66/17) and its relation to Health 2020.

In the latter part of the morning, the Regional Committee would consider the framework of action for integrated health services delivery (document EUR/RC66/15), while Tuesday afternoon would be devoted to action plans for refugee and migrant health (document EUR/RC66/8) and for sexual and reproductive health (document EUR/RC66/13).

8. Following the Director-General's address on the morning of Wednesday, 14 September, the Regional Committee would consider WHO's work in outbreaks and emergencies and a strategy on women's health and well-being in the WHO European Region (document EUR/RC66/14). Elections and nominations would take place at a private meeting in the early part of the afternoon, and the remainder of the day would be devoted to action plans on HIV (document EUR/RC66/9) and viral hepatitis (document EUR/RC66/10).

9. On Thursday, 15 September, the last day of the session, the Regional Committee would discuss the proposed WHO programme budget 2018–2019 (document EUR/RC66/27), as well as action plans for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases in the Region (document EUR/RC66/11) and to strengthen the use of evidence, information and research for policy-making (document EUR/RC66/12); the latter of which had been the subject of a comprehensive consensus-building exercise. Progress reports would also be considered, and the Regional Committee would decide on the dates and places of its future regular sessions. The report of the session would be prepared for subsequent electronic approval.

10. In addition to the formal agenda, informal events would include two ministerial lunches, four technical briefings, a number of breakfast meetings, and side events organized by prospective candidates for the position of WHO Director-General.

11. The representative of the country serving as the link between the Executive Board and the Standing Committee drew attention to a briefing that would take place during the coffee break in the afternoon of Tuesday, 13 September, on a meeting on Health 2020 follow-up on Nordic and Baltic countries to be held in Stockholm, Sweden, in October 2016.

12. The Vice-Chairperson commended the topics chosen for the technical briefings as being highly relevant for the WHO European Region.

## **Draft resolutions and decisions for RC66**

13. The Regional Director recalled that, at its fourth session, the Twenty-third SCRC had agreed that Member States would have one month from that session to submit their initial comments on draft resolutions. She believed that this change in process had worked well; the Twenty-fourth SCRC might wish to evaluate the experience at its second session. On the other hand, her decision to set an extended deadline for receipt of Member States' comments on documents had not been so successful.

14. The Executive Manager, Strategic Partnerships and WHO Representative to the European Union, reported that, pursuant to Rule 22 ter of the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee for Europe, the European Union had recently submitted further

proposals concerning amendments to four draft resolutions (on refugee and migrant health; HIV; evidence, information and research; and the Minsk Declaration). The Regional Director observed that, if members of the Standing Committee from European Union countries had reservations about those proposed amendments, they should take up the matter in the European Union coordination meetings held each morning during the session.

## **Statements to be made by SCRC members during RC66**

15. The Chairperson noted that his statement introducing the report of the Twenty-third SCRC had been expanded to include mention of the SCRC subgroup to support accelerated use of the International Health Regulations (2005). The Vice-Chairperson said that her statement on WHO reform had been amended to highlight emergency reform and the need for alignment with activities at the global level. In that connection, one member of the Standing Committee called for reference to be made to the three levels of the Organization (global, regional and country).

## **Credentials Committee**

16. The Standing Committee agreed that the Credentials Committee should be established with a composition similar to that of the previous year and decided that for RC66 it should consist of the officers of the Twenty-third SCRC and the member from Iceland, supported by the WHO Legal Service.

## **Other matters**

17. Outgoing members of the Standing Committee commended the excellent cooperation they had enjoyed within the Committee and acknowledged the support provided by the Secretariat and the Regional Director.

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