



**World Health
Organization**

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR **Europe**

Regional Committee for Europe
64th session

EUR/RC64/4 Add.1

Copenhagen, Denmark, 15–18 September 2014

14 September 2014

Provisional agenda item 4

140659

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Twenty-first 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-first Standing Committee of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe (SCRC), held in Copenhagen, Denmark on 14 September 2014, the day before the opening of the 64th 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-first SCRC (document EUR/RC64/4 Rev.1).

Introduction

1. The Twenty-first Standing Committee of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe (SCRC) held its fifth and final session at the UN City, Copenhagen, Denmark on Sunday 14 September 2014, the day before the opening of the 64th session of the Regional Committee for Europe (RC64).
2. The Chairperson noted that apologies had been received from the SCRC member from Israel. Dr Amélie Schmitt announced that she had replaced Mr Cyril Cosme as the member from France.
3. The report of the Twenty-first SCRC's fourth session had been approved electronically. The SCRC had met by teleconference on 25 August 2014; the draft report of that teleconference (Annex 1) was approved.
4. In her introductory remarks, the Regional Director observed that two sets of issues ("WHO reform" and "Matters arising out of resolutions and decisions of the World Health Assembly and the Executive Board") had been left open at the conclusion of the SCRC's previous session, since they had depended on further discussion at the Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly. With regard to the former, she commended the excellent input that Member States had provided to the "bottom-up" process of identifying countries' priorities for incorporation in the European Region's perspective on the draft proposed programme budget 2016–2017. The issue of WHO reform also encompassed WHO's engagement with non-state actors (on which there was an informal consultation of Member States held that morning) and the question of strategic budget space allocation (where the substantial work done by the SCRC subgroup on strategic resource allocation had greatly influenced global developments).
5. Seven technical items had been referred to the regional committees by the World Health Assembly and would be taken up under the RC64 provisional agenda item on "Matters arising out of resolutions and decisions of the World Health Assembly and the Executive Board": malaria, hepatitis, antimicrobial resistance, noncommunicable diseases (in the light of the high-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly held in July 2014), the *International Health Regulations (2005)*, poliomyelitis and Ebola virus disease.

Provisional agenda and provisional programme of RC64

6. One item had been added to the provisional agenda of RC64 (an address by Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Mary of Denmark) and a World No Tobacco Day award ceremony had been included in the provisional programme. Consideration of the WHO Regional Office for Europe's performance assessment report 2012–2013 would be integrated into the overall discussion of programme budget matters.

Nominations and elections, including technical committees

7. The Chairperson recalled that the Standing Committee had agreed on a shortlist of candidates at its previous session and reported that he and the Vice-Chairperson had contacted heads of delegations to seek consensus among Member States submitting nominations. The shortlist would be transmitted to heads of delegations in sealed envelopes the following day.

Establishment of the Credentials Committee

8. The Standing Committee agreed that the Credentials Committee should be established with similar composition as the previous year and decided that for RC64 it should consist of the officers of the SCRC and the member from the Republic of Moldova, supported by the WHO Legal Service.

Draft resolutions and decisions for RC64

9. The Chairperson informed the Standing Committee that the European Union (EU) and its member countries had submitted amendments to four draft resolutions for RC64 (those contained in documents EUR/RC64/Conf.Doc./5, EUR/RC64/Conf.Doc./6, EUR/RC64/Conf.Doc./7 and EUR/RC64/Conf.Doc./8). As provided for in Rule 22 bis of the amended *Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee for Europe and of the Standing Committee of the Regional Committee for Europe*, the Standing Committee recommended that the Regional Director should wait until the closure of the first day of the session to receive any further amendments that Member States might wish to submit and agreed that all those amendments should then be circulated to delegations.

Statements to be made by SCRC members during RC64

10. The Chairperson informed the Standing Committee that statements to be made during RC64 had been drafted and circulated to all SCRC members. The Standing Committee agreed that it would be difficult to shorten the Chairperson's statement on the overall work of the SCRC, but that repetitions in the statement on the *Ashgabat Declaration on the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases in the Context of Health 2020* should be avoided.

11. Commenting on the statement that he would deliver on strategic budget space allocation, the SCRC member from Belgium paid tribute to the work done by the members of the Standing Committee's subgroup on strategic budget space allocation and the SCRC itself. That work was not finished, however; the European Region should continue to express its views concerning such allocation at the regional level and the need to strike the right balance between different budget segments.

Other matters

12. Acknowledging the support provided by the Secretariat and the Regional Director, outgoing members of the SCRC recognized the role played by the European Region in showing how to implement the WHO reform process, viewed the opening of a geographically dispersed office as the attainment of an ambitious goal, and were grateful for the learning experience afforded by the roles of member and chairperson.

Annex 1. Report of teleconference with SCRC members

In preparation for the 64th session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe (RC64), the Twenty-first SCRC held an intersessional teleconference on 25 August 2014 to discuss matters of current importance. SCRC members commented on and expressed their support for the draft proposed programme budget 2016–2017 and agreed that the Secretariat should issue a document setting out the European Region’s perspective on it. SCRC members were also presented with and discussed the documents related to WHO reform concerning strategic budget space allocation and the framework for engagement with non-state actors. They also received an overview of the annotated provisional agenda of RC64, with a special highlight on the planned discussions and presentations of agenda items concerning “WHO reform” and “Matters arising out of resolutions and decisions of the World Health Assembly and the Executive Board”. Finally, SCRC members discussed the processing and sharing of tasks with regard to their statements at the Regional Committee session.

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