



EUROPE

Tenth Standing Committee of the Regional Committee for Europe First session

Copenhagen, 19 September 2002

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REPORT OF THE FIRST SESSION

Introduction

1. The Tenth Standing Committee of the Regional Committee (SCRC) held its first session at the WHO Regional Office for Europe in Copenhagen on Thursday 19 September 2002, immediately after the closure of the fifty-second session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe (RC52). The newly elected Chairman, Dr Jarkko Eskola, welcomed those attending (the continuing members from Greece, Luxembourg and Slovenia, the new member from Belgium, and the Executive President of RC52 and the Executive Board member from Lithuania participating as observers).

Election of Vice-Chairperson

2. In view of the fact that many members were not present, the SCRC agreed to postpone the election of its Vice-Chairperson until the following session. To avoid that situation occurring in future, it was suggested that the Regional Director, in his letter to Member States inviting them to submit candidatures for membership of various committees (including the SCRC), should refer to the fact that the first session of each new SCRC was normally held immediately after the closure of the RC session so that their candidates, if elected, would be in a position to attend. In addition, the SCRC recommended that, in this same letter, the Regional Director should also reiterate to Member States the need for them to be represented at the Regional Committee when the relevant agenda item was taken up, as provided in rule 14.2.2 (d) of the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee.

Outcome of RC52

3. The Chairman believed that the outspoken discussions at RC52 would provide valuable guidance for the Regional Director and the Standing Committee. He noted that RC52 had referred three subjects back to the SCRC for further work:

- the review of “geographically dispersed offices” or outposted centres in the European Region (EUR/RC52/Inf.Doc./4);

- the report on the external evaluation of the Regional Office's work on health care reform (EUR/RC52/Inf.Doc./1 and /BD/2); and
- the evaluation concerning membership of the Executive Board, using the terms of reference as previously endorsed by the SCRC (EUR/RC52/3 Add.1, Annex 1).

4. Following a wide-ranging discussion on the report of the external evaluation, including the Regional Director's comments on it, and the debate at RC52, the SCRC agreed that its current and former chairmen and the Regional Director should meet with the evaluators before the SCRC considered the matter again.

5. On the question of membership of the Executive Board, the SCRC agreed to give thought to the possible composition (or re-establishment) of a sub-group to take the evaluation forward, while the Secretariat was asked to identify what further information needed to be gathered in the context of the second and third points in the terms of reference. The question should be placed on the agenda of the SCRC's next session.

6. More generally, with regard to the process of seeking consensus among Member States submitting nominations for membership of the Executive Board and various other committees, the SCRC wished to continue with the current practice as provided for in Rules 14.2.2 (b) and (c) of the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee. It agreed, however, that it might need to consider, at a future session, how best to apply the criteria set out in Annex 3 to document EUR/RC51/3 as part of that process.

7. The SCRC looked forward to receiving progress reports on the work done on the issues of poverty and the role of the private sector in European health systems, but it agreed that they should not be separate items on the agenda of RC53.

Review of the draft plan of work for the Tenth SCRC, 2002–2003

8. The SCRC approved its draft plan of work for the coming year, as contained in document EUR/RC52/SC(1)/1, but decided to move the dates of its next session to Tuesday 26 and Wednesday 27 November 2002. It accepted with gratitude the kind invitation of the government of Slovenia to host that session.