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Rome, Italy, 17–20 September 2018

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Provisional agenda item 4

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Report of the fifth session

This document contains the report of the fifth and final session of the Twenty-fifth Standing Committee of the Regional Committee for Europe (SCRC), held in Rome, Italy on 16 September 2018, before the opening of the 68th 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-fifth SCRC (document EUR/RC68/4 Rev.4).

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Opening of the session

1. The Twenty-fifth Standing Committee of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe (SCRC) held its fifth session in Rome, Italy, on 16 September 2018. The Chairperson welcomed members and other participants and noted that the report of the fourth session of the Twenty-fifth SCRC, which had taken place in Geneva, Switzerland, on 19 May 2018, had been circulated and approved electronically.
2. Reporting on salient events that had taken place since the fourth session, the Regional Director said that two high-level regional meetings on health systems had been held in the previous six months (Sitges, Spain, 16–18 April 2018 and Tallinn, Estonia, 13–14 June 2018). A draft resolution building on the outcome statements from those two meetings was being submitted for adoption by the Regional Committee. In addition, the South-eastern Europe Health Network had held two meetings, focusing on immunization and ageing, while Iceland had hosted the fifth high-level meeting of the WHO Small Countries Initiative, attended by the Prime Minister and numerous ministers. National events had been held in Hungary and Romania, while she and the Director-General of WHO had visited Greece to open a WHO collaborating centre, view a primary health care centre and a centre for migrants, and meet with the Prime Minister.
3. Senior officials from WHO and various directorates-general of the European Commission had met in Geneva in late June 2018 to strengthen the organizations' collaboration on public health, review ongoing joint initiatives and discuss shared future priorities. A special meeting of ministers of health from countries of eastern Europe and central Asia had been held during the 22nd International AIDS Conference (Amsterdam, Netherlands, 23–27 July 2018). The *European health report 2018* had been launched in Copenhagen, Denmark, and London, United Kingdom, on 12 September 2018.
4. The provisional agenda and provisional programme of the session (documents EUR/SC25(5)/2 and EUR/SC25(5)/3) were adopted.

Provisional agenda and provisional programme of the 68th session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe (RC68)

5. The Regional Director reported that preparations for RC68 were going well. All documents were available on the website, and logistic arrangements in the conference centre were proceeding smoothly. The host Government had informed the Secretariat that Dr Giulia Grillo, the recently appointed Minister of Health, would be unable to act as President of RC68; Professor Armando Bartolazzi, the Under-Secretary of State for Health, would be proposed for that office. The session would be opened by Ms Katalin Novák (Hungary), President of RC67, and addressed by Mr Giuseppe Conte, Prime Minister of Italy. Mr Edi Rama, Prime Minister of Albania, would address the session on Tuesday morning, on the subject of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The session would be attended by Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Mary of Denmark, patron of the WHO Regional Office for Europe.
6. Owing to the fact that the Director-General of WHO would only be able to attend the first day of the session, it was proposed that he should deliver his address on the Monday afternoon, to be followed by discussion of the impact of WHO reform and the Organization's

Proposed high-level programme budget 2020–2021. The agenda items on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the report of the Twenty-fifth SCRC and vaccine-preventable diseases and immunization would be taken up on the Tuesday morning. The programme for succeeding days remained unchanged. Revised versions of the provisional agenda (EUR/RC68/2 Rev.1), the provisional agenda (annotated) (EUR/RC68/2 Rev.1 Add.1 Rev.1) and the provisional programme (EUR/RC68/3 Rev.2) had been issued.

7. Members of the Standing Committee commended the adjustment of the programme of RC68 to the Director-General's schedule and welcomed the inclusion of agenda items on vaccine-preventable diseases on Tuesday morning and of vector-borne diseases later in the session, both of which were of high importance to the Region.

8. With regard to preparation of the Proposed high-level programme budget 2020–2021, the Regional Director noted that it had not been possible to obtain Member States' priorities for the forthcoming biennium until June 2018; two thirds of the countries in the Region had currently completed that outcome-oriented process, which was being led by WHO representatives and National Counterparts. In addition, the Secretariat had conducted reviews of country cooperation strategies and biennial collaborative agreements. Fine tuning of the operational planning, including collecting the priorities of the remaining Member States, would continue after RC68.

Draft resolutions and decisions for RC68

9. The Chairperson reported that, during July and the early part of August 2018, the Secretariat had conducted an electronic consultation with Member States on draft resolutions and decisions for RC68. In line with Rule 22 ter of the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee, the European Union had submitted amendments on four draft resolutions.

10. The Standing Committee reviewed the proposed amendments to the draft resolutions on the Action plan to improve public health preparedness and response in the WHO European Region (EUR/RC68/Conf.Doc./5 Rev.1), the Strategy on the health and well-being of men in the WHO European Region (EUR/RC68/Conf.Doc./7 Rev.1), Reaffirming commitment to health systems strengthening for universal health coverage, better outcomes and reduced health inequalities (EUR/RC68/Conf.Doc./8 Rev.1) and Advancing public health for sustainable development in the WHO European Region (EUR/RC68/Conf.Doc./10 Rev.1) and agreed that those revised versions should be translated and posted on the RC68 website. If further discussion was needed on any of the resolutions, one member suggested that informal discussions should be held between Member States.

Membership of WHO bodies and committees

11. The SCRC met in private to consider the nomination of members of the Executive Board, the election of members of the SCRC and the Joint Coordinating Board of the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases, and the appointment of the Regional Evaluation Group and agreed on the shortlist to be submitted to the Heads of Delegations.

Establishment of the Credentials Committee

12. The SCRC decided that the Credentials Committee would be composed of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the SCRC, the Organization's Legal Counsel and the SCRC member from Hungary.

Other matters, closure of the session

13. The outgoing SCRC member from Iceland, having reviewed the progress made by his country in improving life expectancy over the course of four generations, thanked the Standing Committee for his interesting and enjoyable three-year term of office.

14. The Regional Director commended the contributions made by the other outgoing members from Georgia, Italy and Tajikistan. The Executive President of RC67 paid tribute to the friendships she had forged with members of the SCRC.

15. The Chairperson, recalling his country's lengthy cooperation with WHO, looked forward to continuing to attend sessions of the SCRC the following year in his capacity as Executive President of RC68 and extended his best wishes to his successor, the current Vice-Chairperson of the Standing Committee.

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Annex. Agenda

1. Opening by the Chairperson and the Regional Director
2. Adoption of the provisional agenda and the provisional programme
3. Provisional agenda and provisional programme of the 68th session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe (RC68)
4. Draft resolutions and decisions for RC68
5. Membership of WHO bodies and committees
6. Establishment of the Credentials Committee
7. Other matters, closure of the session

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