



EUROPE

**Eleventh Standing Committee of the Regional Committee for Europe
First session**

Vienna, Austria, 11 September 2003

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Report of the first session

Introduction

1. The Eleventh Standing Committee of the Regional Committee (SCRC) held its first session in the Redoutensäle at the Hofburg Congress Centre in Vienna, immediately after the closure of the fifty-third session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe (RC53). The incoming Chairman, Dr Božidar Voljč, welcomed the newly elected members from Austria and Denmark and the alternate member from Uzbekistan, and he paid tribute to the diligence and skill with which the outgoing Chairman had guided the work of the Tenth SCRC.

2. In view of the fact that not all members were present, the SCRC decided to postpone the election of its Vice-Chairperson until the following session.

Outcome of RC53

3. The SCRC made a very preliminary review of the outcome of RC53. It congratulated the host country and the Secretariat on the excellent facilities provided and arrangements made.

4. One striking feature of the session had been the increased participation by representatives of WHO's partner organizations and Member States. Their willingness and interest had made it difficult to keep to the programme, however. The situation could become even more difficult the following year, since the agenda of RC54 might have to include as many as seven major items.

5. Unlike previous practice, representatives of partner organizations had been invited to take the floor under each agenda item at RC53. That had reduced the time available for interventions by representatives of Member States and, more particularly, of nongovernmental organizations. The SCRC suggested that this new arrangement should be evaluated.

6. In view of the fact that some members of the Secretariat had made lengthy presentations, it was suggested that it might be worth exploring the possibility of making such presentations available to participants in written form. The Secretariat pointed out, however, that there were resource constraints on producing those presentations in the four working languages of the Regional Committee just before the opening of a session. Nonetheless, the Regional Director committed himself to ensuring that the timing of presentations would in future be strictly respected.

7. The SCRC looked forward to making a more detailed review of the outcomes of RC53 at its next session.

Plan of work of the Eleventh SCRC, 2003–2004 (First draft)

8. The SCRC endorsed the first draft of its plan of work for 2003–2004 (document EUR/RC53/SC(1)/2) and agreed that subsequent sessions would be held in Yerevan, Armenia (24–25 November 2003), Copenhagen (31 March – 2 April 2004), Geneva (16 May 2004) and Copenhagen (5 September 2004). One member suggested that the session in Geneva might be extended to more than half a day, in view of the likely extent of the agenda.

9. The representative of the host country for the second session would contact members of the Standing Committee with detailed information about travel to Yerevan.