



## EUROPE

### Regional Committee for Europe Fifty-ninth session

Copenhagen, 14–17 September 2009

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### **Sixteenth Standing Committee of the Regional Committee Report of the fifth session**

This document contains the report of the fifth session of the Sixteenth Standing Committee of the Regional Committee (SCRC), held at the WHO Regional Office for Europe on Sunday 13 September 2009. It should be read in conjunction with the consolidated report of the Sixteenth SCRC (document EUR/RC59/4).



## Introduction

1. The Sixteenth Standing Committee of the Regional Committee (SCRC) held its fifth and final session at the WHO Regional Office for Europe in Copenhagen on Sunday 13 September 2009.
2. The Chairperson welcomed Professor Tomica Milosavljević, replacing Mr Jesper Fisker as the European member of the Executive Board invited to attend SCRC sessions as an observer. He also paid tribute to the work done over the years by Ms Suzanne Gravesen and welcomed Ms Johanna Kehler as her replacement on the team at the Regional Office Secretariat servicing meetings of the Organization's regional governing bodies.

## Reports of the fourth session and the special session of the Sixteenth SCRC

3. The reports of the Sixteenth SCRC's fourth session (Geneva, 17 May 2009) and special session (held by teleconference on 18 June 2009) were adopted without amendment.

## Review of the provisional programme of the fifty-ninth session of the Regional Committee (RC59) and the report of the SCRC to RC59, including introductions to agenda items by SCRC members

4. The Deputy Regional Director informed the SCRC that the Regional Director and the Chairperson had jointly sent a letter to Member States informing them that, owing to developments with the 2009 (H1N1) influenza pandemic, it was proposed to broaden the scope of the RC59 agenda item on "Health in times of global economic crisis" to take in that subject. More specifically, addresses and introductory statements by the Regional Director, the Chairperson of the SCRC and Mr Jesper Fisker would be made on the Monday morning, followed by a general debate and concluding with an address by Her Royal Highness Princess Mary of Denmark. The meeting on Monday afternoon would begin with consideration of the repercussion of the global economic crisis, allowing the latter part of the afternoon, after the coffee break, to be devoted to the influenza pandemic. The Standing Committee endorsed that proposed change and recommended that a revised version of the programme should be prepared and made available to delegations at the start of the session.
5. Mr Jesper Fisker explained that his country (acting together with the other co-sponsoring countries) had withdrawn the draft resolution on delineation of tasks with the Council of Europe in the field of blood safety and organ transplantation, since it was unclear whether a common position would be agreed by consensus among all European Member States. He hoped, nonetheless, that the subject would be discussed at RC59 and taken up again by the Seventeenth SCRC.
6. The SCRC noted with satisfaction that its report to RC59 clearly described the work it had carried out during the year. It endorsed the introductions to agenda items that would be made by SCRC members, remarking that they complemented the Secretariat presentations and accurately set out the SCRC's views on the issues under debate.

## **Membership of WHO bodies and committees**

7. The Standing Committee reached agreement by consensus on the candidates that it would recommend for membership of the Executive Board, the SCRC and the Joint Coordinating Board of the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases.

8. The Chairperson confirmed that he was planning (with the Secretariat) to convene a meeting during RC59 with representatives of the three Member States concerned, to give them an insight into the Standing Committee's work on the practices of semi-permanent membership of the Executive Board, and to inform them that the work would continue by the Seventeenth SCRC prior to its consideration by RC60.

## **Other matters**

### **Date and place of regular sessions of the Regional Committee**

9. The Chairperson noted that, by resolution EUR/RC58/R6, the Regional Committee had reconfirmed its decision that RC60 would be held in Moscow, Russian Federation, from 13 to 16 September 2010. Noting that Portugal had hosted a session of the Regional Committee in the past and that Turkey was due to hold parliamentary elections in 2011, the Standing Committee agreed to recommend to the Regional Committee that RC61 should be held in Azerbaijan.

10. In the interests of the unity of the Region, the SCRC was not in favour of the principle whereby sessions of the Regional Committee should necessarily be held alternately in the eastern and western parts of the Region; on the other hand, it recognized the value of holding sessions at the Regional Office when the nomination of the Regional Director was on the agenda (i.e. once every five years) and, in addition, on one other occasion in a five-year period. It accordingly decided that it would further recommend to the Regional Committee that RC62 in 2012 should be held at the Regional Office in Copenhagen.

11. The SCRC further endorsed the practice whereby the locations of RC sessions were decided three years in advance; it duly took note of Malta's invitation to host a future session of the Regional Committee but agreed to leave that matter for consideration by its successor body.

### **Draft plan of work of the Seventeenth SCRC, 2009–2010**

12. While welcoming the invitation by the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to host the first session of the Seventeenth SCRC, the Sixteenth Standing Committee agreed that detailed consideration of the SCRC's draft plan of work for the coming year should be made by its successor body.

### **Officers of RC59**

13. The Standing Committee endorsed the Secretariat's proposals for officers of RC59.

### **Closure of the session**

14. The Chairperson paid tribute to the members of the Sixteenth SCRC for their hard work during the year, and the Regional Director noted that a powerful group of supporters such as the Standing Committee was an invaluable asset to the Organization.