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Thirteenth Standing Committee of the Regional Committee Report of the fifth session

This document contains the report of the fifth session of the Thirteenth Standing Committee of the Regional Committee (SCRC), held at the WHO Regional Office for Europe in Copenhagen on Sunday 10 September 2006. It should be read in conjunction with the consolidated report of the Thirteenth SCRC, contained in document EUR/RC56/6.

Introduction

1. The Thirteenth Standing Committee of the Regional Committee (SCRC) held its fifth and final session at the WHO Regional Office for Europe in Copenhagen on 10 September 2006, on the day before the opening of the fifty-sixth session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe (RC56).
2. The Chairman extended a welcome to Mr Nick Banatvala, alternate to Dr David Harper.

Report of the fourth session of the Thirteenth SCRC

3. The SCRC formally adopted without amendment the report of its fourth session, held in Geneva on 21 May 2006.

Review of the provisional agenda and programme of the fifty-sixth session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe, including arrangements for interventions by SCRC members

4. The Regional Director confirmed that the provisional agenda and programme of the fifty-sixth session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe (RC56) were substantially as had been discussed by the SCRC at previous sessions. It was suggested that the outgoing Executive President should chair the opening of RC56, since the outgoing President was not able to attend. Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Mary of Denmark would attend the first meeting of the session and deliver an address at the end of the morning.
5. As had been done in previous years, members of the SCRC would give its views on each substantive agenda item, after the presentation by a member of the Secretariat, with the aim of “raising the profile” of the SCRC and demonstrating its explicit support of the Regional Office’s programme. The SCRC agreed on which of its members would cover each item.
6. With regard to the agenda item on the Proposed programme budget 2008–2009 and the Medium-term strategic plan 2008–2013, the SCRC agreed that the factual situation would be described by the responsible member of the Secretariat, while the SCRC member concerned would explore and comment on the possible political repercussions.
7. When considering the agenda item on Follow-up to previous sessions of the Regional Committee, and in particular the progress report on tuberculosis control, the SCRC was informed that the High-level Ministerial Forum planned to be held in October 2006 had had to be postponed, possibly until March 2007, in order to ensure close coordination with the programme of countries holding the presidency of the European Union in the months ahead.

Membership of WHO bodies and committees

8. In its discussion on the candidates that it would recommend to the Regional Committee for membership of WHO bodies and committees, the SCRC agreed that it was appropriate for members to absent themselves if they personally were candidates for a particular seat, but that it was not necessary for them to do so if they were merely representing a country that was putting forward a candidate.
9. Recalling its previous discussions and the resolution (EUR/RC53/R1) adopted by the Regional Committee in 2003 on the subject of membership of the Executive Board, the SCRC reached agreement by consensus on the candidates that it would recommend for membership of the Executive Board. In so doing, it noted the difficulty of taking account of the criteria regarding a candidate if that

person's candidature was withdrawn at a late stage and in the absence of a formal curriculum vitae for his or her replacement.

10. On the question of candidates for membership of the SCRC, the Standing Committee reached agreement by consensus on a short list of four candidates for three posts that it would recommend for consideration by the Regional Committee. In addition, it reached agreement by consensus on the need to rebalance the composition of the SCRC as from the elections at RC56 in such a way that six members would be from countries in group I (i.e. those that were members of the European Union or the European Free Trade Association, and southern European countries), while three would come from group II (i.e. the Commonwealth of Independent States and south-eastern European countries).

11. The SCRC noted that, of the three candidate countries for membership of the Joint Coordinating Board of the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases, one country had withdrawn its candidature while another would not be represented at RC56.

Other matters

Draft plan of work of the Fourteenth SCRC, 2006–2007

12. The SCRC agreed to review the first draft of its plan of work for 2006–2007 when it met immediately after the close of RC56.

Officers of RC56

13. The SCRC was informed about the proposed nominations as officers of RC56.

Outgoing Chairman

14. The Chairman thanked the SCRC members for the assistance they had given him during the year, and for their active participation in the work of the Standing Committee. The Vice-Chairman congratulated Dr Gøtrik on the sensitive and efficient way in which he had guided the work of the Standing Committee.