

WHO reform: Chairman's summary

Following adoption of the decision on programmes and priority setting, the Chairman summarizes the conclusions of the Board on WHO reform as follows:

1. Programmes and priority setting

As we have decided, programme and priority setting will be discussed in a Member State-driven process, which will include a meeting to be held here on 27 and 28 February and open to all Member States. The Secretariat will provide documentation for this meeting no fewer than seven days before the meeting.

2. Governance

As proposed following our discussions last week, Member States are invited to submit comments on two of the governance reform proposals considered by this Executive Board. These are (i) the draft revised terms of reference for the Programme Budget and Administration Committee, and (ii) proposals for increasing linkages between Regional Committees and the global governing bodies and harmonization of the practices of Regional Committees. Member States are invited to submit their comments, through the password-protected web site open to all Member States, before 29 February. Member States which currently do not have access to the web site are invited to contact the Secretariat for details on how to register for the site. Based on the feedback received, the Secretariat will prepare revised proposals for submission to the Board at its 131st session, through the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee.

Based on the discussions by the Board at the current session, the Secretariat will revise the proposed options for the schedule of the governing bodies, incorporating the proposal for a revised schedule of meetings of the Regional Committees, Executive Board, Programme, Budget and Administration Committee, and World Health Assembly. This will include a detailed analysis of the advantages and disadvantages, feasibility and costs of the different options. The Secretariat will also take forward the work on streamlining national reporting, and will also further develop proposals for management of resolutions.

Further consultations with Member States will be required on WHO's engagement with other stakeholders, including nongovernmental organizations and industry, and the proposals to review and update principles governing WHO relations with nongovernmental organizations, and to develop comprehensive policy frameworks to guide interaction with the private-for-profit sector, as well as not-for-profit philanthropic organizations.

We have agreed on the importance of partnerships and on the need for better management and greater oversight by the governing bodies, in particular the Executive Board. Members of the Board have proposed a review of WHO's hosting arrangements, along with further efforts to harmonize work with hosted partnerships.

Managerial reforms

The Secretariat will further elaborate the proposals for the predictable financing mechanism, and the contingency fund, based on the feedback from the Executive Board at the present session, and present these to the 131st Executive Board through the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee.

Member States are invited to submit comments on the draft evaluation policy through the password-protected web site open to all Member States, before 29 February. Based on the feedback received, the Secretariat will prepare a revised draft of the evaluation policy for submission to the Board at its 131st session, through the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee.

Concerning stage one of the independent evaluation of WHO, the Executive Board has welcomed the offer of the External Auditor to carry out this step, and expects that the report of stage one will be presented to the Sixty-fifth World Health Assembly, and will include a proposed road map for stage two of the independent evaluation. As discussed by this Executive Board, the Secretariat will update the Terms of Reference for stage one of the independent evaluation based on the written comments submitted by the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations systems.

The Executive Board has also welcomed the agreement of the Joint Inspection Unit to update their reports of 1997 on decentralization within the World Health Organization, and 2003 on management and administration in the World Health Organization.

Preparations for the May meetings of the governing bodies

The Secretariat will prepare a consolidated report covering all aspects of WHO reform for submission to the Sixty-fifth World Health Assembly. The Assembly will have the opportunity to review and discuss all of the proposals on reform. The report will cover the three areas of programmes and priorities, governance and managerial reforms, incorporating the outcome of the Member State-driven process on priority setting, showing linkages and indicating areas where consensus has been reached, and those areas where further discussion is required. It will include the elements of WHO reform agreed in the special session of the Executive Board in November, and further elaboration of the proposals where the Executive Board has requested additional work. The report will include a draft implementation plan, with a budget and a monitoring framework, for consideration by the Health Assembly.

In line with the desire of the Executive Board to strengthen the oversight of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee, which already has a crowded agenda for a one-day meeting, I propose that this particular May meeting of the Committee be extended to three days, to consider the documents on WHO reform being presented to the Sixty-fifth World Health Assembly and 131st Executive Board. The report of the Committee will be presented to the World Health Assembly. For the same reason, I also propose that the 131st Executive Board is extended to two days, to ensure adequate time to consider the Reform proposals.