



**RULES OF PROCEDURE
OF THE
REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE WESTERN
PACIFIC**

As revised at the seventy-fourth session of
the Regional Committee for the Western Pacific
Manila, Philippines – 16 to 20 October 2023

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PACIFIC¹**

MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE

Rule 1

The Regional Committee (hereinafter referred to as the “Regional Committee” or the “Committee”) shall consist of representatives (hereinafter referred to as the “representatives”), one each from the States Members and Associate Members (hereinafter referred to as “Members”) and areas participating pursuant to Article 47 of the Constitution² forming the Western Pacific Region (hereinafter referred to as the “Region”) of the World Health Organization (hereinafter referred to as the “Organization”). The representatives may be accompanied by alternates and advisers.

¹ Adopted at the sixth session of the Regional Committee for the Western Pacific (resolution WPR/RC6.R21) and amended at its seventh, ninth, thirteenth, fifteenth, twenty-third, thirtieth, thirty-first, forty-second, fifty-seventh, sixty-first, and sixty-third sessions (resolutions WPR/RC7.R20, WPR/RC9.R8, WPR/RC13.R3, WPR/RC15.R2, WPR/RC23.R6, WPR/RC30.R1, WPR/RC31.R7, WPR/RC42.R1, WPR/RC57.R3, WPR/RC61.R3 and WPR/RC63.R8).

² Under the conditions laid down in resolution WHA2.103.

Rule 2

Subject to the terms of any existing agreements, the Committee may arrange for consultation with respective regional committees of the United Nations and with those of other specialized agencies and with other regional international organizations having interests in common with the Organization and for their participation, without vote, in its discussions and in those of committees or subcommittees convened or established under its authority.

The Regional Director, in consultation with the Regional Committee, may invite States not members of the Committee to participate without vote in the sessions of the Committee. Non-State actors admitted into official relations with the World Health Organization pursuant to the Framework of Engagement with Non-State Actors are invited to participate without vote in the sessions of the Regional Committee, as provided for in paragraph 55 of the Framework. Other international, regional and national nongovernmental organizations, international business associations and philanthropic foundations not in official relations with the Organization but accredited to participate in meetings of the Committee in accordance with paragraph 57 of the Framework of Engagement may also participate without vote in the deliberations of the Regional Committee, as provided for in the Framework of Engagement.

CREDENTIALS

Rule 3

The Members shall communicate to the Regional Director, if possible 15 days before the date fixed for the opening of the session of the Committee, the names of their representatives, including all alternates and advisers. Similarly, the States and organizations referred to in Rule 2 invited to be represented at the session, shall communicate the names of the persons by whom they shall be represented. The credentials of representatives shall be delivered to the Regional Director, if possible not less than one day before the opening of the session of the Committee. Such credentials shall be issued by one of the following: the Head of State, the Head of Government, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Health or any other competent authority. Such credentials may be sent electronically or hand delivered to the Regional Director.

Rule 3 bis

The officers of the Regional Committee shall examine the credentials of representatives and report thereon to the Regional Committee. Any representative to whose admission a Member has made an objection shall be seated provisionally with the same rights as other representatives, until the officers have reported and the Regional Committee has rendered its decision.

SESSIONS

Regular Sessions

Rule 4

The Committee shall hold at least one regular session a year. It shall determine at each regular session the time and place of its next regular session. Notices convening the Committee shall be sent by the Regional Director at least eight weeks before the commencement of the session to the Members, to the Director-General of the Organization (hereinafter referred to as the “Director-General”), and to the organizations referred to in Rule 2 invited to be represented at the session.

Special Sessions

Rule 5

The Regional Director, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Committee, (hereinafter referred to as the “Chairperson”), shall also convene the Committee to a special session at the joint request of at least 10 of the Members, addressed to him or her in writing and stating the reason for the request. In this case, the Committee shall be convened within 30 days following receipt of the request and the session shall be held at the Regional Office unless the Regional Director, in consultation with the Chairperson, determines otherwise. The agenda of such a session shall be limited to the questions

having necessitated that session. Formal proposals related to items on the agenda may be introduced not later than 10 days before the opening of a special session.

If exceptional events, such as those referred to in Article 28(i) of the Constitution, occur requiring immediate action by the Regional Committee, the Regional Director shall, in consultation with the Chairperson, convene the Committee in a special session and shall fix the date and determine the place of the session; however, the special session shall not be held if a majority of the Members object, within two weeks of the date of dispatch of the letter of convocation, to convening the Committee.

Rule 6

The meetings of the Committee shall be held in public, unless the Committee decides otherwise.

AGENDA

Rule 7

The provisional agenda of each session shall be drawn up by the Regional Director in consultation with the Chairperson. It shall be dispatched together with the notice of convocation to be sent in accordance with Rule 4 or Rule 5, as the case may be.

Rule 8

Except in the case of sessions convened under Rule 5, the provisional agenda of each session shall include *inter alia*:

- (a) the annual report of the Regional Director on the work in the Region;
- (b) all items, the inclusion of which has been prescribed by the World Health Assembly (hereinafter referred to as the "Health Assembly");
- (c) all items, the inclusion of which has been prescribed by the Executive Board of the Organization;
- (d) any item proposed by the Director-General or the Regional Director;
- (e) all items, the inclusion of which has been prescribed by the Committee at a previous session;
- (f) all items pertaining to the programme budget for the current financial period and all items pertaining to the programme budget for the financial period following the current financial period; and
- (g) any item proposed by a Member.

Rule 9

Subject to the provisions of Rule 5, the Regional Director, may in consultation with the Chairperson, include any question suitable for the agenda which may arise or reach him or her up to 21 days before the opening day of the session, in a supplementary agenda which the Committee shall examine together with the provisional agenda. Any items arising or submitted later shall be included in a supplementary agenda, provided that the Committee agrees.

OFFICERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Rule 10

The Committee shall elect its officers, a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, one Rapporteur in Chinese, one Rapporteur in English and one Rapporteur in French, from among the representatives each year at its first regular session held during that year. The officers shall hold office until their successors are elected. The Chairperson shall not become eligible for re-election until two years have elapsed since he or she ceased to hold office.

Rule 11

In addition to exercising the powers which are conferred upon him or her elsewhere by these Rules, the

Chairperson shall declare the opening and closing of each meeting of the Committee, shall direct the discussions, ensure observance of these Rules, accord the right to speak, put questions and announce decisions. He or she shall rule on points of order and, subject to these rules, shall control the proceedings at any meeting and shall maintain order thereat. The Chairperson may, in the course of the discussion of any item, propose to the Committee the limitation of the time to be allowed to each speaker or the closure of the list of speakers.

Where consultation with the Chairperson is provided for in these Rules, and the Chairperson is not available for consultation, such consultation shall be held with the Vice-Chairperson. If neither the Chairperson nor the Vice-Chairperson is available for consultation, information of an important or time-sensitive nature shall be shared with Members of the Western Pacific Region.

Rule 12

If the Chairperson is absent from a meeting or any part thereof, he or she shall designate the Vice-Chairperson to preside. The same procedure shall be followed when the Chairperson is unable to attend a session of the Committee.

If the Chairperson is unable to make this designation, the Vice-Chairperson shall preside during the session or meeting.

If neither the Chairperson nor the Vice-Chairperson is available to preside at a session or a meeting, the Committee shall have the power to elect an additional Vice-Chairperson ad interim to preside for such portion as is necessary.

Rule 13

If the Chairperson for any reason is unable to complete his/her term of office, the Vice-Chairperson shall act as Chairperson for the remaining period of his/her term.

Rule 14

The Chairperson, or the Vice-Chairperson acting as Chairperson, shall normally not vote but he or she may, if necessary, appoint one alternate from his/her delegation to act as representative of the Government.

If the Chairperson, or the Vice-Chairperson acting as Chairperson, is the only representative of a Member he or she shall have the right to vote.

SUBCOMMITTEES OF THE COMMITTEE

Rule 15

The Committee may establish such subcommittees as it may deem necessary for the study of, and report on, any item on its agenda.

The Committee shall review from time to time, and in any case once a year, the need to maintain any subcommittee established under its authority.

SECRETARIAT

Rule 16

The Regional Director shall act as the Secretary of the Committee and of any subdivision thereof. He/She may delegate these functions.

Rule 17

The Regional Director shall report to the Committee on the technical, administrative and financial implications, if any, of all agenda items submitted to the Committee.

Rule 18

The Regional Director, or a member of the Secretariat designated by him or her, may at any time make either oral or written statements concerning any question under consideration.

Rule 19

The Secretariat shall prepare minutes of the meetings. These minutes shall be prepared in the working languages and shall be distributed to the representatives as soon as possible after the close of the meetings to which they relate. Representatives shall inform the Secretariat in writing of any corrections they wish to have made within such period of time as shall be indicated by the Regional Director, having regard to the circumstances.

Rule 20

All resolutions, recommendations and other decisions of the Committee shall be communicated by the Regional Director to the representatives, to all Members of the Region and to the Director-General.

LANGUAGES

Rule 21

Chinese, English and French shall be the official and working languages of the Committee.

Rule 22

Speeches made in one of the working languages shall be interpreted into the other working languages.

Rule 23

Any representative may speak in a language other than the official languages. In this case he or she shall provide for interpretation into one of the working languages. Interpretation into the other working languages by an interpreter of the Secretariat may be based on the interpretation given in the first working language.

Rule 24

All resolutions, recommendations and other decisions of the Committee shall be drawn up in the working languages.

CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Rule 25

A majority of the representatives entitled to vote and present at the session shall constitute a quorum.

Rule 26

No representative may address the Committee without having previously obtained the permission of the Chairperson. The Chairperson shall call upon speakers in the order in which they signify their desire to speak. The Chairperson may call a speaker to order if his/her remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.

Rule 27

Any representative may at any time request an alternate designated in accordance with Rule 3 to speak and vote on his/her behalf on any question. Moreover, upon the request of the representative or his/her alternate, the Chairperson may allow an adviser to speak on any particular point, but the latter shall not have the right to vote.

Rule 28

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may rise to a point of order and the point of order shall be immediately decided by the Chairperson. A representative may appeal against the ruling of the Chairperson in which case the appeal shall immediately be put to the vote. A representative rising to a point of order may not speak on the substance of the matter under discussion but on the point of order only.

Rule 29

During the course of a debate the Chairperson may announce the list of speakers and, with the consent of the Committee, declare the list closed. He or she may, however, accord the right to reply to any representative if in his or her opinion a speech delivered after he or she has declared the list closed makes it desirable.

Rule 30

During the discussion on any matter a representative may move the suspension or adjournment of the meeting. Such motions shall not be debated but shall be immediately put to a vote.

For the purpose of these Rules “suspension of the meeting” means the temporary postponement of the business of

the meeting and “adjournment of the meeting”, the termination of all business until another meeting is called.

Rule 31

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion. In addition to the proposer of the motion, one speaker may speak in favour of, and one against, the motion, after which the motion to adjourn the debate shall be immediately put to the vote.

Rule 32

A representative may at any time move the closure of the debate on the item under discussion whether or not any other representative has signified his/her wish to speak. If a request is made for permission to speak against closure, it may be accorded to not more than two representatives, after which the motion shall be immediately put to the vote. If the Committee decides in favour of closure the Chairperson shall declare the debate closed. The Committee shall thereafter vote only on the one or more proposals moved before the closure.

Rule 33

The following motions shall have precedence in the following order over all other proposals or motions before the meeting, except a point of order:

- (a) to suspend the meeting;
- (b) to adjourn the meeting;
- (c) to adjourn the debate on the item under discussion; and
- (d) for the closure of the debate on the item under discussion.

Rule 34

Subject to Rule 33, any motion calling for a decision on the competence of the Committee to adopt a proposal submitted to it shall be put to the vote before a vote is taken on the proposal in question.

Rule 35

A representative may move that parts of a proposal or of an amendment shall be voted on separately. If objection is made to the request for division, the motion for division shall be voted upon. Permission to speak on the motion for division

shall be given only to two speakers in favour and two speakers against. If the motion for division is carried, those parts of the proposal or of the amendment which are subsequently approved shall be put to the vote as a whole. If all operative parts of the proposal or the amendment have been rejected, the proposal or the amendment shall be considered to have been rejected as a whole.

Rule 36

When an amendment to a proposal is moved, the amendment shall be voted on first. When two or more amendments to a proposal are moved, the Committee shall first vote on the amendment deemed by the Chairperson to be furthest removed in substance from the original proposal and then on the amendment next removed therefrom, and so on, until all the amendments have been put to the vote. Where, however, the adoption of one amendment necessarily implies the rejection of another amendment, the latter amendment shall not be put to the vote. If one or more amendments are adopted, the amended proposal shall then be voted upon. If an amendment to a proposal has been accepted by the original proposer, such an amendment shall be deemed to be an integral part of the original proposal and no separate vote shall be required thereon.

A motion is considered an amendment to a proposal if it merely adds to, deletes from, or revises part of that proposal.

A motion which constitutes a substitution for a proposal shall be considered as a proposal.

Rule 37

If two or more proposals are moved, the Committee shall, unless it decides otherwise, vote on the proposals in the order in which they have been circulated to all Member States, unless the result of a vote on a proposal makes unnecessary any other voting on the proposal or proposals still outstanding.

Rule 38

A motion may be withdrawn by its proposer at any time before voting on it has commenced, provided that the motion has not been amended, or if amended, that the proposer of the amendment agrees to the withdrawal. A motion thus withdrawn may be re-introduced by any representative.

Rule 39

When a proposal has been adopted or rejected, it may not be reconsidered at the same session of the Committee, unless the Committee, by a two thirds majority of the representatives present and voting, so decides. Permission to speak on a motion to reconsider shall be accorded only to two speakers opposing the motion, after which it shall be immediately put to the vote.

Rule 40

The Chairperson may at any time require any proposal, motion, resolution or amendment to be seconded.

VOTING

Rule 41

Each representative entitled to vote shall have one vote. For the purpose of these Rules, the phrase “representatives present and voting” means representatives casting an affirmative or negative vote. Representatives abstaining from voting are considered as not voting. In a secret ballot all invalid votes shall be so reported to the Committee and shall be counted as abstentions.

Rule 42

Except as otherwise provided by the Constitution of the Organization or decided by the Health Assembly or as laid down in these Rules of Procedure, the decisions of the Committee shall be made by a majority of the representatives present and voting.

Rule 43

If the votes are equally divided on a matter other than an election, the proposal shall be regarded as not adopted.

Rule 44

The Committee shall normally vote by show of hands, except that any representative may request a recorded vote. Where an appropriate electronic system is available, the Committee may decide to conduct any vote under this Rule by electronic means.

When the Committee conducts a recorded vote without using electronic means, the vote shall be conducted by roll-call, which shall then be taken in the English alphabetical order of the names of the Members. In the case of a roll-call vote, the name of the Member to vote first shall be determined by lot.

Rule 45

The vote or abstention of each representative participating in any recorded vote shall be inserted in the record.

Rule 46

After the Chairperson has announced the beginning of voting, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order in connection with the actual conduct of voting.

Rule 47

Elections shall normally be held by secret ballot. However, except as concerns the nomination of the Regional Director, if the number of candidates for elective office does not exceed the number of offices to be filled, no ballot shall be required, and such candidates shall be declared elected. Where ballots are required, two tellers appointed by the Chairperson from among the representatives shall assist in the counting of votes. The nomination of the Regional Director shall be decided by a secret ballot in accordance with Rule 51.

Rule 48

In addition to the cases provided for elsewhere by these Rules, the Committee may vote on any matter by secret ballot if it has previously so decided by a majority of the Member States present and voting, provided that no secret ballot may be taken on budgetary questions.

A decision under this Rule by the Committee whether or not to vote by secret ballot may only be taken by a show of

hands; if the Committee has decided to vote on a particular question by secret ballot, no other mode of voting may be requested or decided upon.

A motion for a secret ballot takes precedence over other motions for a vote.

Rule 49

Subject to the provisions of Rule 51 when only one elective place is to be filled and no candidate obtains in the first ballot the majority required, a second ballot shall be taken which shall be restricted to the two candidates obtaining the largest number of votes; if in the second ballot the votes are equally divided, the Chairperson shall decide between the candidates by drawing lots.

Rule 50

When two or more elective places are to be filled at one time under the same conditions, those candidates obtaining in the first ballot the majority required shall be elected. If the number of candidates obtaining such majority is less than the number of places to be filled, there shall be as many additional ballots as are necessary to fill the remaining places, the ballots being restricted to the candidates obtaining the greatest number of votes in the previous ballot to a number not more than twice the places remaining to be filled.

Rule 51

Not less than six months before the date fixed for the opening of a session of the Committee at which persons are due to be nominated as Regional Director, the Director-General shall inform each Member that he or she will receive proposals for the names of persons for nomination by the Committee as Regional Director.

Any Member may propose the name of one or more persons for the post of Regional Director, submitting with the proposal particulars of each person's qualifications and experience. Members shall be mindful of the Code of Conduct for the Nomination of the Regional Director of the Western Pacific Region adopted by the Regional Committee and shall bring it to the attention of such persons. Such proposals shall be sent to the Director-General, so as to reach him or her at the headquarters of the Organization at Geneva, Switzerland, not less than 12 weeks before the date fixed for the opening of the session.

The Director-General shall, not less than 10 weeks before the date fixed for the opening of the session of the Committee, cause copies of all proposals for nomination for the post of Regional Director (with particulars of qualifications and experience) received by him or her within the period specified, to be sent to each Member.

If no proposals have been received by the Director-General in time for transmission to Members in accordance with this Rule, Members shall be informed accordingly not less than 10 weeks before the opening of the session of the Regional Committee. The Committee shall itself establish a list of candidates, composed of the names proposed in secret by the representatives present and entitled to vote.

If the Regional Director in office is available for re-appointment, the Director-General shall inform each Member accordingly at the time he or she invites proposals for names of nominees for the post of Regional Director. The name of the Regional Director in office thus available shall automatically be submitted to the Committee and shall not require a proposal from any Member.

If the Director-General receives more than five proposals within the period specified in the second paragraph of this Rule, the Committee shall draw a short list of five candidates at a private meeting at the commencement of its session. For this purpose, the Committee shall hold a secret ballot, and the five candidates obtaining the highest number of votes shall make up the short list. In the event of a tie between two or more candidates such that there are more than five candidates identified for inclusion on the short list, there shall be additional ballots between the candidates receiving the tie votes, with those receiving the highest number of votes filling the remaining place or places on the short list.

The persons proposed in accordance with the second paragraph of this Rule or – in case of the preceding paragraph being applicable – those persons on the short list, shall be interviewed by the Committee as soon as possible at a private meeting. The interview shall consist of a presentation by each candidate in addition to answers to questions from Members. The Committee shall determine, as appropriate, modalities for the interviews.

The nomination of the Regional Director shall take place at a private meeting of the Committee. The Regional Director is elected by secret ballot from among the persons proposed in accordance with this Rule.

For this purpose, each representative entitled to vote shall write on his/her ballot paper the name of a single candidate chosen from among the persons proposed. If no candidate obtains the majority required, the candidate who obtains the least number of votes shall be eliminated at each ballot. If the number of candidates is reduced to two, there shall be not more than three further ballots. In the event of a tie after the third such ballot, the whole voting procedure established by this paragraph shall be recommenced based on the shortlist of candidates.

The name of the person so nominated shall be announced at a public meeting of the Regional Committee and submitted to the Executive Board.

The appointment of the Regional Director shall be for five years, and he or she shall be eligible for reappointment once.

If the Regional Director is unable to perform the functions of his/her office or if his/her office becomes vacant before his/her term of office is completed, the Committee shall nominate a person for the post of Regional Director at its next session, provided that the other provisions of this Rule are met. If the other provisions of this Rule cannot be met, the Committee shall take a decision at its next session with a view to nominating a person and submitting his/her name to the Executive Board as soon as possible. For the interim period until an appointment of a new Regional Director can be made through the process outlined by this provision, and to ensure business continuity, the Director-General shall designate an acting Regional Director.

SUSPENSION AND AMENDMENT OF RULES OF PROCEDURE

Rule 52

Subject to the provisions of the Constitution of the Organization any of these Rules may be suspended by the Committee provided that at least 48 hours of notice of the proposal for such suspension has been given to the Chairperson and communicated by him or her to the representatives 24 hours before the meeting at which the proposal is to be submitted. If, however, on the advice of the Chairperson, the Committee is unanimously in favour of such a proposal, it may adopt it immediately and without notice.

Rule 53

Amendments of or additions to these Rules may be adopted by the Committee, provided that the Committee has received and considered a report thereon by an appropriate subcommittee.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Rule 54

The Committee may at its discretion apply such Rules of Procedure of the Health Assembly or of the Executive Board of the Organization as it may deem appropriate to particular

circumstances which are not covered by the Rules of the Committee.