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MECHANISMS AND PROCEDURE FOR SELECTION OF THE
REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR EUROPE

Following a review by the Programme Committee of the Executive Board of procedures for appointment of regional directors, the Regional Committee for Europe, at its thirty-seventh session, requested the Regional Director to draw up a proposal regarding the selection of the Regional Director for Europe for submission to the thirty-eighth session, following a preliminary review by the Consultative Group on Programme Development (CGPD). The Executive Board at its eighty-first session subsequently reviewed a working paper on the subject presented by the Director-General as well as comments by the various regional committees. The Programme Committee will discuss the matter again at its meeting in October 1988.

The present document sets out proposals regarding criteria for candidates for the post of Regional Director for Europe as well as rules for the selection process, and lists five specific points for discussion by the CGPD. Also attached for the Group's consideration are a proposed draft resolution for submission to the Regional Committee, suggestions for amendments to the latter's Rules of Procedure, and a timetable of events and proposed grouping of Member States for a new selection procedure.

1. Introduction

At its session from 29 June to 2 July 1987, the Programme Committee of the Executive Board reviewed procedures for the appointment of regional directors and requested the Director-General to present a working paper on the subject to the Executive Board at its eighty-first session. The Programme Committee felt that this paper should reflect the following principles:

- consensus should be reached by the regional committee concerned;
- agreement should be reached on criteria for candidates;
- a search group should be set up in each region;
- the Director-General should be consulted by each Regional Search Group (RSG).

At its thirty-seventh session, the Regional Committee for Europe requested the Regional Director, taking into account the Board's discussions in January 1988, to draw up a proposal concerning the selection of the Regional Director for Europe for submission to the thirty-eighth session, following a preliminary review by the CGPD.

In January 1988, the Executive Board reviewed a note on the subject by the Director-General (document EB81/6) as well as comments by the different regional committees in 1987. Several Board members felt that the present procedures for selection of regional directors could be improved. It was considered that the proposed criteria for candidates needed further review, and that the Director-General should be more involved in the selection process. Some members also felt that the procedure for selection for the post of Director-General should be revised.

The Board did not take a clear decision or adopt a resolution on the matter. Some members suggested that the whole question should be referred back to the Programme Committee, and, at a meeting on 19 January 1988, the latter agreed to review it again in October 1988.

2. Present selection procedure

To date, the procedure followed in the European Region is that laid down in Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee for Europe. The Director-General's formal role has been limited to the following actions:

- requesting nominations for candidatures from Member States in the Region by means of a confidential letter sent in February (paragraph 1);
- transmitting the names of candidates to Member States in the Region in July (paragraph 4);
- acting as secretary to the private session of the Regional Committee at which the nomination is to be made.

However, the Director-General has in the past been consulted informally by a number of Member States when a new European regional director was to be elected, as he has naturally been seen to be in a particularly good position to judge the requirements of the post and the suitability of candidates.

3. Reasons for change

The Constitution of WHO specifies that the head of the Regional Office shall be the Regional Director, appointed by the Executive Board in agreement with the Regional Committee (Article 52). The Regional Director has overall responsibility for the way in which WHO's resources in the Region - manpower and financial - are used, so as to respond in the best way possible to the policies laid down by the Regional Committee (for regional matters), the Executive Board and the World Health Assembly (for global matters) and the

Director-General (as chief technical and administrative officer of the Organization). This mandate gives the Regional Director very wide and onerous responsibilities. In recent years, several developments have rendered this task particularly demanding.

The adoption of a common European health policy and the responsibility conferred on the Regional Office by the Regional Committee to stimulate the development of this policy in Member States have a number of implications. The basic role of the Organization has evolved from one of a mainly technical nature to one also comprising a substantial element of health policy advocacy. To carry out this task, a difficult choice must be made among different approaches, in which a careful balance must be struck between national sensitivities on the one hand and the need for an effectiveness in WHO's work on the other. Furthermore, the wide scope of the health for all policy has expanded WHO's field of work from health services and environmental health to include such issues as lifestyles and multisectoral cooperation.

At the same time, the 32 Member States of the European Region are undergoing very rapid political, economic, technical and cultural change. The leadership role in the health for all movement in Europe given to the Regional Office requires that it be in the forefront of these developments, working with day-to-day problems as well as taking a broader, long-range view. Moreover, while the Organization previously worked primarily with public health administrators and specialists in the health field, it now needs to reach a far wider audience, including politicians, sectors other than health, professional organizations, universities, the private sector, the media, the general public, etc.

The mounting economic problems of European countries in recent years have led to increased scrutiny of the health sector by economists, political scientists, politicians and the general public, thus introducing sharper economic arguments into priority-setting and health policy debate. Furthermore, political attacks on the United Nations family in general and decreased financing for WHO in particular have led to zero growth - and from 1990-1991 negative growth - of the budget for the Regional Office. This is generating constant pressure for more efficient and imaginative use of the Regional Office's resources so as to maintain dynamism in the work.

For all these reasons, it is obvious that the choice of a person to be Regional Director for Europe is an important and a difficult one; yet, paradoxically, the present method of selection for this post is less stringent than that applied to all lower levels of WHO staff who are selected according to well defined criteria. It seems essential that the choice of Regional Director be guided first and foremost by the professional and individual characteristics of the person concerned. Under the present procedure, however, the qualities expected of candidates are not specified. Furthermore, there is no mechanism whereby different candidates can be assessed on an objective basis and measured by a common yardstick to enable the Regional Committee to make the best choice.

Finally, in view of the Constitution's provision (Article 31) that the Director-General shall be the chief technical and administrative officer of the Organization, the holder of this office should play a positive, consultative role to allow the Regional Committee to benefit from his/her views before making its recommendations.

4. Proposals for change

It is suggested:

- (a) that criteria be established by which each candidate can be measured against a set of clearly defined requirements for the post of Regional Director;
- (b) that a revised procedure be introduced for the Regional Committee's selection of the Regional Director.

4.1 Criteria for candidates

It is proposed that the following criteria for the candidates should be applied.

The candidate must have a true commitment to WHO's mission. The candidate should be truly committed to the values, role and policies of WHO and notably the goal of health for all. There should be clear evidence of his/her personal involvement in furthering that commitment.

The candidate must have proven leadership qualities and integrity. The candidate must have demonstrated long-term and consistent leadership qualities. A commitment to outcomes and effective results - as opposed to merely a concern about processes - is essential, and the person must be dynamic. Ability to communicate in a clear and inspiring way is an important requirement. Such communication skills need to be effective with highly different target groups, including mass media exposure, and involve direct personal contact with political and other leaders in the public health field, health personnel, a wide range of academic and other professional groups outside the health sector, and WHO staff, etc. In view of the high goals of WHO and its impartial international character, the personal integrity of the candidate and the ability to withstand pressures from official or private sources contrary to the interests of the Organization are essential.

The candidate must have proven managerial ability. The person should have demonstrated clear ability to manage a complex organization in the health field. His/her performance in that role should have demonstrated a determination to make a thorough analysis of the problems and possibilities for solving them; the setting of clear goals and objectives; the design of appropriate programmes for optimal use of the total resources; the efficient use of those resources; and a careful process for monitoring and evaluation. Weight should be given to the candidate's skills in fostering teamwork - with appropriate delegation - and in creating a harmonious working environment. In view of the need for the work of the Region to interact with and actively support the efforts of other regions and headquarters, the candidate's ability to work effectively with leaders, at both national and international levels, in health and other sectors, is an important element.

The candidate should be medically qualified and have a broad understanding of public health. Since WHO is the leading international technical agency in health matters and since the Regional Director is the top professional leader of WHO's health for all movement in Europe, an extensive knowledge of public health issues is essential. A medical degree is necessary, as well as broad epidemiological experience, and an understanding

of the implications for the Region of developments in science and technology. Practical working experience in public health - preferably at both national and international levels - is necessary and postgraduate training in public health is desirable. The candidate should be of an age by which he/she would have gained adequate experience in all relevant fields, yet preferably young enough to have the potential to serve for more than one term before reaching the age of 65 years if considered suitable to do so.

The candidate should have a broad understanding of the health problems and political, cultural, ethnic and other sensitivities in the Region. In view of the above, it follows that the candidate would normally be a national of one of the Member States of the Region, but this requirement should not exclude the consideration of an outstanding candidate from outside the Region. The candidate must be fluent in at least one of the official languages of the Region, and a working knowledge of others would be an asset.

4.2 Selection procedure

The second proposal for change is that the Regional Committee should establish a Regional Search Group (RSG) that would make a preliminary evaluation of the proposed candidates, using the criteria described in paragraph 4.1. In the unlikely event that no names of candidates were submitted by Member States (as described in Rule 47, paragraph 5, of the present Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee for Europe) or if, in the opinion of the RSG the candidates submitted did not offer adequate choice for the Committee, the RSG would actively search for additional candidates and submit its proposals for consideration by Member States at an informal private meeting to be convened during the World Health Assembly in May of the year concerned. With the approval of Member States, a final list of candidates would then be drawn up and submitted to the Regional Committee at its next session, together with the RSG's evaluation of the candidates.

4.2.1 RSG

Criteria and composition. As recommended by the Programme Committee of the Executive Board, the RSG should be relatively small and be representative of the different subgroupings of Member States in the Region. It would comprise four members, each of whom should have a clear understanding of the needs of the Region as a whole and a good knowledge of WHO and who would be chosen by the Committee from among heads of delegations. To allow for the possibility of members of the RSG being unavailable, alternates would be chosen from among other heads of delegations within the same subgrouping. The RSG would select its own chairperson.

Selection of members. In the year prior to that in which the Regional Director is due to be nominated, Member States would be informed of the need to establish an RSG through a letter of convocation to attend the Regional Committee. On the first day of the Regional Committee session that year, the Chairman would invite Member States of the subregional groupings (Annex 2) to propose as member of the RSG one head of delegation, plus an alternate from among the other heads of delegation within that grouping, for consideration by the Committee in the course of its work.

Following the decision of the Regional Committee as to the membership of the RSG, the latter would meet as soon as possible to decide on its programme and method of work. A possible timetable of events is given in Annex 1.

4.2.2 Terms of reference

The RSG would have the following terms of reference:

- (a) to enter into dialogue with Member States and encourage them to nominate suitable candidates;
- (b) in the event of no proposals being submitted, as described in paragraph 4.2, to propose its own list of candidates or, if necessary, to suggest additional names for endorsement at an informal private meeting of the Regional Committee during the World Health Assembly.
- (c) to consult with and consider the views of the Director-General concerning the candidates;
- (d) to interview candidates as necessary;
- (e) other than in the case of a serving regional director as described below, to evaluate a presentation by the candidate of his/her views and intentions in relation to the requirements of the post;
- (f) in the case of a serving regional director who wishes to be considered for a further term, to evaluate his/her performance as part of its assessment of candidates, using the criteria outlined in paragraph 4.1, and to assess the overall effectiveness of the Regional Office's work during the previous term of office;
- (g) to evaluate and make a priority ranking of the candidates and report thereon to the Regional Committee.

4.2.3 Frequency of meetings

The RSG would establish its method of work, bearing in mind the financial implications. It is believed that it would need to meet three or four times before finalizing its report to the Regional Committee. It would decide on a suitable place for the meetings.

To enable the RSG to perform its work effectively, the Director-General would need to approach Member States in October of the year preceding the nomination of the Regional Director. The deadline for receipt of nominations by Member States would then be 15 February.

4.2.4 Role of the Regional Committee

As mentioned above in paragraph 4.2, the Regional Committee would formally appoint the members of the RSG, preferably by consensus.

The Committee would consider the written evaluation report of the RSG before taking its final decision as to which candidature to transmit to the Executive Board. It would submit the RSG's evaluation report to the Executive Board together with the nomination.

4.2.5 Role of the Executive Board

The Executive Board, in the light of the recommendation and comments of the Regional Committee and on its review of the RSG's evaluation report, would or would not endorse the Committee's nomination and, in case of disagreement, request the Committee to make another recommendation.

4.2.6 Role of the Director-General

The Director-General would, as hitherto, submit to Member States a request for nominations for the post of Regional Director, as required by the Rules of Procedure.

The Director-General should be available for consultation by the RSG, as required, and should be given the opportunity to comment on the candidates and, when appropriate, to suggest possible additional candidates for the RSG's consideration.

The Director-General would, as in the past, transmit the Regional Committee's nomination to the Executive Board.

4.2.7 Emergency arrangements

In the event of the post of Regional Director unexpectedly falling vacant, the following steps would be taken:

(a) the Director-General would designate a person to act as Regional Director until the Regional Committee was able to nominate a new incumbent;

(b) the Director-General would consult with the Chairman of the Regional Committee as to whether a special meeting of the Committee should be convened to establish an RSG and decide on the timing of the selection process or whether this could be dealt with at the Committee's next regular session.

4.2.8 Secretarial support

The RSG would need secretarial and administrative support. As suggested by the Executive Board, this could be provided by the Regional Director currently in office if the latter does not intend to seek a further term of office. Should that be the case, however, it would be more appropriate for the secretarial and administrative support to be provided by arrangement with the Director-General.

4.2.9 Financial implications

The estimated cost of the RSG would be approximately US \$35 000 per quinquennium.

5. Implications for the Regional Committee in 1988

The above proposals would have the following implications for the work of the Regional Committee in 1988:

- (a) the Regional Committee would need to approve the new scheme;
- (b) the Rules of Procedure relating to the nomination of the Regional Director would need to be revised, and the changes approved by the Regional Committee;
- (c) if the Regional Committee finds the new scheme acceptable, it should establish an RSG immediately, since it would have to nominate a regional director for the next term at its thirty-ninth session;
- (d) the Regional Committee would need to approve a budget for the work of the RSG in 1988/1989.

6. Conclusions

The above proposals are put forward in the light of the Executive Board's discussion as to the most efficient and effective method for the selection of regional directors, bearing in mind the need to bring about an improvement while deviating as little as possible from the present procedure.

The proposals take into account the four main principles discussed by the Executive Board, namely the need for regional committees to reach consensus; the need to establish criteria for candidates; the value of having a search committee to identify and review suitable candidatures; and, finally, the need to consult the Director-General. Account has also been taken of the specific requirements of the European Region in developing the scheme.

The CGPD is requested, in particular, to review and advise on:

- (a) the proposed criteria for candidates for the post of Regional Director for Europe;
- (b) the proposals for the establishment of an RSG;
- (c) the proposed terms of reference and methods of work of the RSG;
- (d) the roles to be played by the Regional Committee, the Executive Board and the Director-General in this process;
- (e) the proposed draft resolution whereby the Regional Committee would endorse the new scheme and amend its Rules of Procedure accordingly.

Annex 1

TIMETABLE OF EVENTS ACCORDING TO THE NEW SCHEME

- September-October 1988 The Regional Committee at its thirty-eighth session adopts scheme, approves amendments to the Rules of Procedure for Europe, and establishes an RSG to prepare for nomination of the Regional Director at the thirty-ninth session.
- The RSG meets to decide on its programme of work and begins dialogue with the Director-General and Member States.
- The Director-General requests Member States to submit nominations for the post of Regional Director (by mid-October).
- February 1989 Deadline for receipt of nominations: 15 February.
- The Director-General transmits copies of proposals with details of candidates to the Chairman of the RSG.
- February-April 1989 The RSG commences its review, interviews and makes an evaluation of candidates, including consultation with the Director-General and Member States as required.
- April 1989 The Chairman of the Regional Committee decides whether an informal private meeting of the Committee is required in May 1989.
- May 1989 If so decided, the Regional Committee holds a meeting during the World Health Assembly, at which the RSG requests Member States to consider endorsing a final list of candidates.
- End June 1989 Possible extended deadline for submission of candidates if the Regional Committee has so decided in May.
- July 1989 The RSG finalizes its report.
- The Director-General sends a list of candidates and particulars to Member States.
- Simultaneously, the Chairman of the RSG sends an evaluation report to the Chairman of the Regional Committee, under confidential cover, with a copy to each chief representative designated to attend the session and to the Director-General.
- September 1989 The Regional Committee nominates a candidate for the post of Regional Director to the Executive Board.

Annex 2

SUGGESTED SUBREGIONAL GROUPINGS OF MEMBER STATES FOR COMPOSITION
OF A REGIONAL SEARCH COMMITTEE

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Denmark	Albania	Austria	Bulgaria
Finland	Greece	Belgium	Czechoslovakia
Iceland	Italy	France	German Democratic
Ireland	Malta	Germany, Federal	Republic
Israel	Portugal	Republic of	Hungary
Norway	San Marino	Luxembourg	Poland
Sweden	Spain	Monaco	Romania
United Kingdom	Turkey	Netherlands	USSR
		Switzerland	Yugoslavia
