

Code of Conduct for the nomination of the Regional Director of the Eastern Mediterranean Region of the World Health Organization (Annex 2 of document EM/RC63/8 Rev.2)

This Code of Conduct (Code) aims to promote an open, fair, equitable and transparent process for the nomination of the Regional Director of the Eastern Mediterranean Region of the World Health Organization (WHO). In seeking to improve the overall process, this Code addresses a number of areas, including the submission of proposals and the conduct of electoral campaigns by Member States and candidates.

The Code is a political understanding reached by the Member States of the Eastern Mediterranean (Member States). It recommends desirable behaviour by Member States and candidates with regard to the nomination of the Regional Director to increase the fairness, openness and transparency of the process and thus its legitimacy, as well as the legitimacy and acceptance of its outcome. As such, the Code is not legally binding, but Member States and candidates are expected to honour its contents.

The Code builds on, and reinforces, the provisions pertaining to nomination of Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean Region as set out in Rule 51 of the Rules of Procedure of the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean.

A. General requirements

I. Basic principles

1. The whole nomination process, as well as electoral campaign activities related to it, should be guided both by the provision of Rule 51 of the Rules of Procedure and by the following principles that further the legitimacy of the process and of its result:

- fairness
- equity
- transparency
- good faith
- dignity, mutual respect and moderation
- non-discrimination
- merit.

II. Authority of the Regional Committee and its Rules of Procedure

1. Member States accept the authority of the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean (Regional Committee) to conduct the nomination of the Regional Director in accordance with Rule 51 of its Rules of Procedure and the relevant resolutions of the Regional Committee.

2. Member States that propose persons for the post of Regional Director have the right to promote their candidature. The same applies to candidates with regard of their own candidature. In the exercise of that right, Member States and candidates should abide by all rules governing the nomination of the Regional Director contained in Rule 51 of the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee, as well as in relevant resolutions and decisions of the Regional Committee.

III. Responsibilities

1. It is the responsibility of Member States and candidates to observe and respect this Code.

2. Member States acknowledge that the process of nomination of the Regional Director should be fair, open, transparent, equitable and based on the merits of the individual candidates. They should make this Code publicly known and easily accessible.

B. Requirements concerning the different steps of the nomination process

I. Submission of proposals

1. When proposing the name of one or more persons for the post of Regional Director, Member States will be requested by the Director-General to submit the necessary particulars of each person's qualifications and experience using the standard form annexed to this Code as an appendix, in order to improve the comparability of the merits and qualifications of candidates against the criteria adopted by the Regional Committee with Decision EM/RC59/13.

II. Electoral campaign

1. This Code applies to electoral activities related to the nomination of the Regional Director whenever they take place until the nomination by the Regional Committee.

2. All Member States and candidates should encourage and promote communication and cooperation among one another during the entire nomination process. Member States and candidates should act in good faith bearing in mind the shared objectives of promoting equity, openness, transparency and fairness throughout the nomination process.

3. Member States and candidates should refer to one another with respect; no Member State or candidate should at any time disrupt or impede the campaign activities of other candidates. Nor should any Member State or any candidate make any oral or written statements or other representation that could be deemed slanderous or libelous.

4. All Member States and candidates should disclose their campaign activities (e.g. hosting of meetings, workshops, visits). Information disclosed will be posted on a dedicated page of the web site of the Regional Office.

5. Member States and candidates should refrain from improperly influencing the nomination process, by, for example, granting or accepting financial or other benefits as a quid pro quo for the support of a candidate, or by promising such benefits.

6. Member States and candidates should not make promises or commitments in favour of, or accept instructions from, any person or entity, public or private, when that could undermine, or be perceived as undermining, the integrity of the nomination process.

7. Member States that have proposed a candidate should facilitate meetings between their candidate and other Member States, if so requested. Wherever possible, meetings between candidates and Member States should be arranged on the occasion of conferences or other events involving Member States of the Region rather than through bilateral visits.

8. Member States nominating candidates for the post of Regional Director should consider disclosing grants or aid funding for the previous two years in order to ensure full transparency and mutual confidence among Member States.

9. Travel by candidates to Member States to promote their candidature should be limited in order to avoid excessive expenditure, which could lead to inequality among Member States and candidates. In this connection, Member States and candidates should consider using as much as possible existing mechanisms (regional committees, Executive Board, World Health Assembly) for meetings and other promotional activities linked to the electoral campaign.

10. Electoral promotion or propaganda under the guise of technical meetings or similar events should be avoided.

11. After the Director-General has dispatched the names and particulars of candidates to Member States in accordance with the fourth paragraph of Rule 51 of the Rules of Procedure, he/she will open on the web site of WHO a password-protected question-and-answer web forum open to all Member States and the candidates who request to participate in such a forum.

12. After the Director-General has dispatched the name and particulars of candidates to Member States in accordance with the fourth paragraph of Rule 51 of the Rules of Procedure, the Regional Office will post on its web site information on all candidates who so request including their curricula vitae and other particulars of their qualifications and experience as received from Member States, based on the standard form annexed to this Code as an appendix, as well as their contact information. The web site will also provide links to individual web sites of candidates upon request. Each candidate is responsible for setting up and financing his/her own web site. The Regional Office will also post on its web site, at the time referred to in the first paragraph of Rule 51 of the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee, information on the nomination process and the applicable rules and decisions.

III. Nomination

1. The nomination of the Regional Director is conducted in private meetings of the Regional Committee in accordance with Rule 51 of the Rules of Procedure. Attendance at the private meetings is prescribed by the Director-General and limited to essential Secretariat staff. Candidates should not attend those meetings even if they form part of the delegation of their country. The votes in the private meeting are conducted by secret ballot. The results of the ballots should not be disclosed by Member States.

2. Member States should abide strictly by the Rules of Procedure and other applicable resolutions and respect the integrity, legitimacy and dignity of the proceedings. As such, they should avoid behaviours and actions, both inside and outside the conference room where the nomination takes place, which could be perceived as aiming at influencing its outcome.

3. Member States should respect the confidentiality of the proceedings and the secrecy of the votes. In particular, they should refrain from communicating or broadcasting the proceedings during the private meetings through electronic devices.

IV. Internal candidates

1. WHO staff members, including the incumbent Regional Director, who are proposed for the post of Regional Director are subject to the obligations contained in the WHO Staff Regulations and Rules, as well as to the guidance that may be issued from time to time by the Director-General.

2. WHO staff members who are proposed for the post of Regional Director must observe the highest standard of ethical conduct and strive to avoid any appearance of impropriety. WHO staff members must clearly separate their WHO functions from their candidacy and avoid any overlap, or perception of overlap, between campaign activities and their work for WHO. They also have to avoid any perception of conflict of interest.

3. WHO staff members are subject to the authority of the Regional Director and the Director-General, in accordance with the applicable regulations and rules, in case of allegations of breach of their duties with regard to their campaign activities.

4. The Regional Committee may suggest that the Director-General consider applying Staff Rule 5.1 concerning special leave with or without pay to staff members who have been proposed for the post of Regional Director.

Appendix. Standard form for the proposal of names of persons for nomination of the Regional Director of the Eastern Mediterranean Region of the World Health Organization

Please provide details of the qualifications and characteristics of the person proposed by your Government with regard to the criteria contained in Decision no. 3 contained in document EM/RC59/13.

1) A strong technical and public health background and extensive experience in international health

2) Competency in organizational management

3) Proven historical evidence for public health leadership

4) Sensitivity to cultural, social and political differences

5) A strong commitment to the work of WHO

6) The good physical condition required of all staff members of the Organization
