

## **Application from the Russian Federation to attend the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean in an observer capacity**

### **Background and context**

1. In a letter dated 18 June 2024 addressed to the Regional Director, the Government of the Russian Federation expressed interest in attending meetings of regional governing bodies for the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region in the capacity of observer. The letter was signed by H.E. Dr Oleg O. Salagay, State Secretary and Deputy Minister of Health of the Russian Federation. A copy of the letter is attached as Annex 1 to this document.
2. In his letter, H.E. Dr Salagay cites as justification for the request the long-term close socioeconomic ties between the Russian Federation and the Member States of the Eastern Mediterranean Region and their developing cooperation through the platform of international organizations including mutual positions on multiple health-related issues in the context of the World Health Assembly.
3. He also notes that countries from the Region including Egypt, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United Arab Emirates recently joined the BRICS Association and are actively engaged in its work.
4. Four WHO Member States are currently invited to join sessions of the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean as observers: Algeria, Cyprus, South Sudan and Türkiye. Some other WHO regional committees are also attended by observer Member States from other regions.

### **Rights and limitations of observer Member-States at the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean**

5. If invited to attend sessions of the Regional Committee as an observer Member State, the Russian Federation would have the opportunity to engage in discussions without being a full member of the Regional Committee:
  - **Participation.** Observer Member States can attend meetings of the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean except for those meetings of a closed nature or that are limited to specific members.
  - **Statements.** Observer Member States can make statements and contribute to discussions on various issues in the established order of delivery, following interventions by Member States of the Region.
  - **No voting rights.** Observer Member States do not have the right to vote in the Regional Committee.

### **Action for the Regional Committee**

6. The proposal was referred for initial consideration by the Programme Subcommittee of the Regional Committee at its twentieth meeting, held on 17 July 2024.
7. The Subcommittee noted the request and agreed that it should be referred for consideration by the Regional Committee at its upcoming 71st session in October 2024. The Subcommittee recommended that an advance communication be shared with Member States of the Region to facilitate their consideration of the issue.

## Annex 1

**МИНИСТЕРСТВО  
ЗДРАВООХРАНЕНИЯ  
РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ  
(МИНЗДРАВ РОССИИ)**

**СТАТС-СЕКРЕТАРЬ –  
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На № \_\_\_\_\_ от \_\_\_\_\_

Минздрав России



Вв-3374888

Директору Регионального бюро  
Всемирной организации  
здравоохранения для стран  
Восточного средиземноморья

д-ру Ханан Хассан Балхи

**Уважаемая доктор Балхи!**

Благодарим Вас за обстоятельный и продуктивный разговор, состоявшийся в ходе 77-ой сессии Всемирной ассамблеи здравоохранения.

Российская Федерация и страны Восточного Средиземноморья имеют многолетние тесные социально-экономические связи, которые основываются на добрых традициях дружбы и взаимного уважения.

Отмечаем также тесное сотрудничество, складывающееся между Российской Федерацией и странами Восточного Средиземноморья на площадках международных организаций. В рамках участия в заседаниях Всемирной ассамблеи здравоохранения, имея схожие позиции по широкому кругу вопросов здравоохранения, наши страны неоднократно совместно выносили на рассмотрение различные резолюции и решения. Некоторые страны региона в прошлом году вошли и принимают активное участие в работе объединения БРИКС.

В связи с этим, имеем честь просить предоставить Российской Федерации статус наблюдателя для участия в заседаниях руководящих органов Регионального бюро Всемирной организации здравоохранения для стран Восточного Средиземноморья.

Пользуясь случаем, разрешите возобновить Вам уверения в весьма высоком уважении.

Подлинник электронного документа, подписанного ЭП,  
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Министерства Здравоохранения  
Российской Федерации.

**СВЕДЕНИЯ О СЕРТИФИКАТЕ ЭП**

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**О.О. Салагай**

World Health Organization Regional  
Office for the Eastern Mediterranean

Dr. Hanan Hassan Balkhy

Dear Dr. Balkhy!

We thank you for the thorough and productive conversation that took place during the 77th World Health Assembly.

The Russian Federation and the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean have long-term close socio-economic ties, which are based on the good traditions of friendship and mutual respect.

We also note the close cooperation that is developing between the Russian Federation and the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean on the platforms of international organizations. As part of their participation in meetings of the World Health Assembly, having similar positions on a wide range of health issues, our countries have repeatedly jointly submitted various resolutions and decisions for consideration. Some countries in the region last year joined and now are actively participating in the work of the BRICS association.

In this regard, we have the honor to request that the Russian Federation be granted an observer status to participate in the meetings of the governing bodies of the World Health Organization Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean.

Taking this opportunity, allow us to renew assurances to you of our deepest respect.

State Secretary–Deputy  
Minister of Health  
of the Russian Federation

Oleg O. Salagay