

DECISIONS

REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

October 2022

Sixty-ninth session

Decision No. 1 Election of officers

The Regional Committee decided to elect the following as the Officers of its hybrid 69th session:

Chair: H.E. Dr Mai Alkaila, Minister of Health of Palestine

Vice Chair: H.E. Dr Hani Mousa Bader Al-Eqabi, Minister of Health of Iraq

Vice Chair: H.E. Dr Firas Abiad, Minister of Public Health of Lebanon

Based on rules of procedure of the Regional Committee, the Committee decided that the following should constitute the Drafting Committee:

Dr Ahmed El-Sobky (Egypt), Dr Ahmad Dmeirieh (Syrian Arab Republic), Mrs Noura Abdi (Djibouti), Dr Yaser Bouzia (Palestine), Dr Hanadi Haydar Hassan (Sudan), Dr Hussain Alrand (United Arab Emirates), Dr Mohammed Mustafa Rajamanar (Yemen).

Secretariat: Dr Rana Hajjeh, Dr Christoph Hamelmann, Dr Richard Brennan, Dr Maha El-Adawy, Dr Yvan Hutin, Dr Awad Mataria, Dr Arash Rashidian, Mr Tobias Boyd.

Decision No. 2 Special procedures for the hybrid 69th session of the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean

Preamble

1. Given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, special procedures need to be put in place so that the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean (the “Regional Committee”) can pursue its work through a hybrid modality, with some Members attending in person and other Members and participants participating through a secure online platform. The proposed arrangements for a hybrid session were shared with members of the Programme Subcommittee of the Regional Committee at its fourteenth meeting, held on 29 June 2022, and the Subcommittee agreed to those arrangements.
2. The special procedures to regulate the conduct of the hybrid 69th session of the Regional Committee are set out in Annex 1 of the draft decision hereinafter. The special procedures shall apply to meetings of the hybrid 69th session of the Regional Committee opening on 10 October and closing not later than 13 October 2022.
3. The draft decision and the special procedures detailed in Annex 1 follow the arrangements adopted by the governing bodies of the World Health Organization (WHO) at their meetings held in 2022, considering the local circumstances.

In view of the foregoing, the Regional Committee,

- Recalling its decision to hold its 69th session in person if the COVID-19 pandemic status allowed;
- Taking note of the recommendation made by the Programme Subcommittee that the Regional Committee should meet in person with flexibility to accommodate members who cannot physically participate, and that the Regional Committee may therefore meet in a hybrid modality;
- DECIDES to adopt the special procedures to regulate the conduct of its hybrid 69th session set out in Annex 1.

Annex 1

Special procedures to regulate the conduct of the hybrid 69th session of the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean

RULES OF PROCEDURE

1. The Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean shall continue to apply in full, except to the extent that they are inconsistent with these special procedures, in which case the Regional Committee's decision to adopt these special procedures shall operate as a decision to suspend the relevant Rules of Procedure to the extent necessary, in accordance with Rule 52 of the Rules of Procedure of the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean (the "Regional Committee").

ATTENDANCE AND QUORUM

2. Attendance by Members of the Regional Committee shall be through physical attendance or secure access to videoconferencing or other electronic means allowing representatives to hear other participants and to address the meeting from the conference room or remotely.
3. For the avoidance of doubt, virtual attendance by Members shall be taken into account when calculating the presence of a quorum.
4. Up to three members of each delegation of Members can be physically present in the Kuwait Conference Hall in the Regional Office.
5. Attendance by invited States that are not Members of the Committee, invited representatives of regional bodies of the United Nations, other specialized agencies and other international regional organizations having interests in common with the World Health Organization (WHO), invited non-State actors admitted in official relations with WHO, or invited non-State actors not in official relations with WHO but accredited by the Regional Committee shall be through secure access to videoconferencing or other electronic means that allow representatives to hear other participants and to address the meeting remotely.

ADDRESSING THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

6. Members who are invited to the Regional Committee, including those who are unable to travel and attend in person, shall be provided with the opportunity to take the floor at the invitation of the Chair or on her or his acceding to a request from the Member concerned, in the case that no pre-recorded statement is submitted in advance. Members shall have the opportunity, if they so wish, to submit individual pre-recorded video statements of no more than three (3) minutes in duration, in advance of the opening session, by no later than 1 October 2022. The pre-recorded video statements so submitted will be broadcast at the hybrid session in lieu of a live intervention. In the event that, due to time limitations or connectivity issues, oral statements (whether live or pre-recorded) cannot be delivered on one or more agenda items on the agenda of the Regional Committee session, Members may submit written statements in accordance with paragraph 7 below, to be posted online in the language of submission.
7. Members, invited States that are not Members of the Committee, invited representatives of regional bodies of the United Nations, other specialized agencies, or other international regional organizations having interests in common with the World Health Organization, invited non-State actors that are in official relations with WHO, and invited non-State actors that are not in official relations with WHO but have been accredited by the Regional Committee, are invited to submit, if they so wish, written statements relating to one or more of the items on the agenda of the Regional Committee session, of no more than 600 words and in one of the working languages of the Regional Committee, for posting in the language of submission on the website for the Regional Committee under the related agenda item. They may provide translations of their written statements into one or more of the working languages of the Regional Committee if they so wish. Such translations shall be clearly marked with the words "unofficial translation". Written statements shall be sent in advance of the opening of the 69th session of the Regional Committee. They may be submitted in lieu of an oral intervention or to complement an oral intervention.

8. Written and pre-recorded video statements shall remain posted, in the language of submission, on the website of the Regional Committee until the adoption of the report of the 69th session of the Regional Committee. The content of the written and pre-recorded video statements submitted in lieu of an oral intervention will be summarized, as appropriate, in accordance with the usual practice in the report of the 69th session of the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean.
9. Any Member wishing to take the floor should signal their wish to speak. Any Member wishing to raise a point of order or exercise a right of reply in relation to an oral or pre-recorded video statement made at or for the 69th session of the Regional Committee should signal their intention to do so. The right of reply to an oral statement or a pre-recorded statement shall be exercised orally at the end of the relevant meeting. Any Member wishing to exercise a right of reply in relation to a written statement submitted in lieu of an oral intervention to the hybrid 69th session of the Regional Committee should do so in writing as soon as possible and, in any case, no later than 10 working days following closure of the Regional Committee session. A Member wishing to respond to such a reply should do so in writing as soon as possible and, in any case, no later than 10 working days following the posting of the reply to which it responds. The content of statements so submitted will be summarized, as appropriate, in accordance with the usual practice in the report of the 69th session of the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean.

REGISTRATION AND CREDENTIALS

10. Online registration will follow the normal practice. Additional information is provided in the related circular letter.
11. In accordance with Rule 3, the names of representatives, including all alternates and advisers, shall be communicated electronically to the Regional Director, if possible no later than 15 September 2022. Credentials of representatives, including all alternates and advisers, shall be submitted electronically to the Regional Director no later than 26 September 2022. Given the hybrid nature of the 69th session of the Regional Committee, credentials so submitted electronically shall be considered as formal credentials.
12. The Officers of the 68th session of the Regional Committee will assess, before the opening of the 69th session of the Regional Committee, whether the credentials of Members are in conformity with the requirements of the Rules of Procedure, and shall report to the Regional Committee accordingly during the opening with a view to the Committee making a decision thereon.
13. The Officers of the 69th session of the Regional Committee shall be invited, during the 69th session, to assess whether credentials submitted by representatives of Members following the decision of the Regional Committee at the opening of its session are in conformity with the requirements of the Rules of Procedure, and shall report to the Regional Committee accordingly with a view to the Regional Committee making a decision thereon.

MEETINGS

14. All meetings of the Regional Committee shall be held in public, except for those clearly indicated on the programme as closed meetings, which shall be limited to Members of the Regional Committee.

DECISION-MAKING

15. All decisions of the Regional Committee taken in the 69th hybrid session should, as far as possible, be taken by consensus. In any event, given the hybrid nature of the session, no decision shall be taken by a show of hands vote or by a secret ballot, unless a member of the delegation of each Member of the Regional Committee entitled to vote is physically present at the meeting at which the vote is to be taken. In the event that a vote is required, it is understood that delegates of Members who are physically present for the purposes of the session are deemed to be duly authorized to speak and vote on behalf of their respective Members.
16. In case of a roll-call vote, should any delegate (physically attending or attending via secure online platform) fail to cast a vote for any reason during the initial roll-call, that delegate shall be called

upon a second time after the conclusion of the initial roll-call. Should the delegate fail to cast a vote on the second roll-call, the delegation shall be recorded as absent.

RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS

17. Proposals for substantive amendments to proposed resolutions and decisions shall be introduced in writing and transmitted to the Regional Director at least 24 hours prior to the opening of the Regional Committee. The Regional Director shall circulate copies of such amendments to the delegations no later than the opening of the first day of the session.
18. Proposed amendments shall be considered by the Officers of the Regional Committee, with the assistance of the Secretariat, with a view to submitting a revised draft resolution or decision to the Regional Committee for adoption before the closure of its session. If adoption of the revised draft resolution or decision is not feasible before the closure of the session, the Regional Director will transmit to Member States any such proposal for consideration under a written silence procedure, as follows:
 - a) The communication will contain the text of the proposal to be considered under this written silence procedure and will set a date for the receipt of any objections by Members. Any such objection is to be conveyed in writing and addressed to the Regional Director. The date for receipt of any objection will be 14 days from the date of dispatch of the communication.
 - b) In the absence of the receipt by the set date of any written objection from a Member, the proposal concerned will be considered as having been adopted by the Regional Committee.
 - c) In the event of the receipt by the set date of one or more written objections from a Member, the proposal concerned will be considered as having not been adopted by the Regional Committee.
 - d) The Regional Director will inform Members of the outcome of the written silence procedure as soon as possible after the set date referred to in paragraph 18(a) and will finalize the report of the session of the Committee by summarizing the process outlined above and including the resolution(s) and/or decision(s) so adopted.

USE OF LANGUAGES

19. For the avoidance of doubt, Rule 22 of the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee shall continue to apply, whereby oral and pre-recorded video statements made in one of the official languages shall be interpreted into the other official languages.

Decision No. 3 Adoption of the agenda

The Regional Committee adopted the agenda of its 69th session.

Decision No. 4 Place and date of future sessions of the Regional Committee

The Regional Committee decided to hold its 70th session at the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean in Cairo, Egypt, from 9 to 12 October 2023.

Decision No. 5 Nomination of two Member States to the Standing Committee on Health Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response

The Regional Committee endorsed the nomination of Morocco and Yemen to serve on the Standing Committee on Health Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response for a two-year period.

Decision No. 6 Verification of credentials

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean and Decision No. 2 on special procedures for the hybrid 69th session of the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean, the Vice-Chair of the 68th session of the Regional Committee reported to the Regional Committee that the credentials submitted by the Members attending the 69th session of the Regional Committee were reviewed and found in compliance with the Committee's Rules of Procedure, as amended by the Special Rules of Procedure. The report of the Vice-Chair of the 68th session on the verification of credentials was accepted by the Regional Committee.

Decision No. 7 Nomination of a Member State to the Joint Coordinating Board of the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases

The Regional Committee endorsed the nomination of Morocco to serve on the Joint Coordinating Board of the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases for a four-year period from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2026.

Decision No. 8 Award of the State of Kuwait Prize for the Control of Cancer, Cardiovascular Diseases and Diabetes in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

The Regional Committee decided to award the State of Kuwait Prize for the Control of Cancer, Cardiovascular Diseases and Diabetes in the Eastern Mediterranean Region to Dr Arif Abulla Al Nooryani (United Arab Emirates) in the area of cardiovascular diseases, Dr Afshin Ostovar (Islamic Republic of Iran) in the area of diabetes, and Dr Randah Ribhi Hamadeh (Bahrain) in the area of cancer, based on the recommendation of the Foundation Committee for the State of Kuwait Prize for the Control of Cancer, Cardiovascular Diseases and Diabetes in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Prize will be presented to the laureates during the 70th session of the Regional Committee in 2023.

Decision No. 9 Relocation of the Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean

The 69th session of the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean, having considered the report of the Regional Director on the proposal made by the Government of Egypt to relocate the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean (the “Regional Office”) to the UN Common Premises to be located in the New Administrative Capital within the Governorate of Cairo:

1. Welcomes the offer made by the Government of Egypt;
2. Supports in principle the relocation of the Regional Office to the UN Common Premises to be located in the New Administrative Capital within the Governorate of Cairo, and recommends that further information and analysis of the financial and other implications arising out of the relocation be undertaken to inform the Regional Director’s implementation of the relocation, and the development of a phased plan for achieving such relocation in a way that takes into account these implications, and in particular the implications for staff as well as safeguarding business continuity; and
3. Requests the Regional Director to provide updates to future sessions of the Regional Committee on ongoing arrangements to implement the relocation of the Regional Office and the plans for the future of the current premises of the Regional Office.