



CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH OF CHILE TO THE WORKING GROUP ON STREAMLINING THE GOVERNANCE MECHANISMS OF PAHO

Chile applauds and congratulates the Working Group on Streamlining the Governance Mechanisms of PAHO for its efforts and the proposals it made during its meeting in Washington, D.C., 5 to 6 December 2005.

1. Reform and simplification of the Subcommittee on Planning and Programming (SPP), the Subcommittee on Women, Health, and Development, and the Standing Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations.

The Ministry of Health of Chile is familiar with and supports several of the recommendations issued by the Working Group on PAHO in the 21st Century, the Report of the Joint Inspection Unit, and the Report of the Subcommittee on Women, Health, and Development in matters concerning governance and the functions of the Executive Committee's advisory bodies.

a. Reform and simplification of the Subcommittee on Women, Health, and Development

The Ministry of Health of Chile concurs with the changes suggested by the Working Group, in the sense that the Subcommittee has now completed 24 years of labor. Many of the issues and reforms for which it was created have been addressed by the Member States during this period; thus, its objectives are no longer suited to the current reality. In light of this, this Ministry supports the dissolution of the Subcommittee and endorses the proposal to create a Technical Advisory Group that furthers implementation, strategy development, and actions, as well as monitoring of the PAHO Policy on gender equity, also assuming responsibility for overseeing the process for submitting reports to the Executive Committee.

b. Reform and simplification of the Subcommittee on Planning and Programming (SPP)

The Ministry of Health of Chile considers the transformation of the SPP a response to the Organization's need to adopt results-based management with monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. From this perspective, we agree with the Group's recommendation during the December 2005 meeting that the SPP become an organ of the Executive Committee with the authority to study matters related to the program, budget, and administration and to issue recommendations to the Executive Committee. Furthermore, we endorse the new name and proposed functions.

Regarding the composition and frequency of SPPA meetings, we believe that the discussion should focus on two aspects that in our view are fundamental:

- Improve the Member States' participation and involvement in the matters that the SPPA would address
- Emphasize that the contents of the SPPA meeting(s) should link administrative and financial aspects with implementation of the Organization's programs and policies

We believe that the proposed changes will make this subcommittee more efficient, more specific in terms of its powers and functions, and a better advisory body to Executive Committee.

2. Process for electing the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau

The Ministry of Health of Chile takes the view that the changes in the process for electing the Director of the Bureau are designed to make it more transparent and to optimize the participation of the Organization's Governing Bodies.

In this regard, we:

- Consider it important that the Executive Committee establish explicit, detailed criteria for the nomination and selection of candidates
- Consider it reasonable that the deadline for submitting nominations be three months. We therefore consider a deadline of four months, as proposed by Canada and Argentina, excessive.
- Consider the proposal to create an Open Forum within the sessions of the Executive Committee so that candidates can present their programs and work plans a positive and necessary initiative for obtaining a clear idea of their proposals to improve the Organization. Before adopting this recommendation, it will be necessary to create rules for these presentations; this is essential for candidates to present their platforms on an equal footing.
- Endorse the idea that internal candidates who aspire to reelection or a higher office should, three months before the election, request paid leave. Notwithstanding, we believe it would be appropriate to consider the number of Organization staff that might be nominated, due to the potential financial implications. All expenditures that arise during that period cannot be defrayed with PAHO funds. Furthermore, we endorse the idea of freezing the use of "discretionary funds" immediately before and after the election. In any case, we are concerned about the very existence of these funds, since all financial resources approved in the budget should be clearly identified and their use defined. In this regard, we join Argentina in requesting the Secretariat to provide further information on the existence of "discretionary funds" before the suggestion is accepted.
- Prefer, in reference to an open vs. secret ballot, to maintain voting by secret ballot. It should be noted that this mechanism is employed in the majority of the elections for positions in Inter-American bodies.
- Agree, in regard to cabinet post descriptions, with the proposal to prepare descriptions and selection criteria for the posts of Deputy Director, Assistant Director, and Director of Administration, since this will make it possible to optimize the support for the work of the Director. In this regard, we believe that continuity and length of experience should be sought, given the eminently technical nature of these posts.