

170th SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Provisional Agenda Item 7.13-A

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A. SEVENTY-FIFTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

1. The Seventy-fifth World Health Assembly (WHA) of the World Health Organization (WHO) was held from 22-28 May 2022 in Geneva, Switzerland. Representatives and delegates of 194 Member States were in attendance. The President of the Assembly was Djibouti, represented by Dr. Ahmed Robleh Abdilleh.

2. Five countries served as Vice Presidents of the Assembly in representation of their respective regions, with the United States of America representing the Region of the Americas. Trinidad and Tobago served as Vice-Chair of Committee A. The Region was also represented at the General Committee by Cuba, Dominica, El Salvador, the United States of America, and Uruguay, as well as in the Committee of Credentials by Bolivia and Nicaragua.

3. In his opening remarks (1), Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of WHO, asked delegates to reflect on where the world stood after two years of the most severe health crisis in a century and over 6 million COVID-19 deaths worldwide. Recognizing that restrictions had been lifted in many countries, Dr. Tedros cautioned that the pandemic was most certainly not over, stating, “This virus has surprised us at every turn—a storm that has torn through communities again and again, and we still can’t predict its path, or its intensity. We lower our guard at our peril.”

4. Dr. Tedros reminded delegates that almost one billion people in lower-income countries remain unvaccinated and that only 57 countries have vaccinated 70% of their population—almost all of them high income. He called on all countries that had not yet reached 70% vaccination coverage to commit to achieving it as soon as possible, and on those countries who had reached the target to support those who had not.

5. The Director-General also addressed to the “formidable convergence of disease, drought, famine and war, fueled by climate change, inequity and geopolitical rivalry” currently facing the world. Recalling the attacks on health workers that had taken place during 2022, Dr. Tedros emphasized that attacks on health workers and health facilities are not only a breach of international humanitarian law but an assault on the right to health. Speaking to the theme of the Assembly, *Health for peace, peace for health*, Dr. Tedros underscored the attainment of peace as a prerequisite for health. In closing, the

Director-General urged Member States to put aside their differences, collaborate where possible, compromise where needed, and seek peace.

6. The elections for the new Director-General post were carried out on the third day of the Assembly, 24 May 2022, during which time Member States re-elected Dr. Tedros to serve a second five-year term as Director-General. Dr. Tedros was proposed as a candidate by several Member States, and was the only candidate proposed. His new mandate officially commences on 16 August 2022.¹

7. During the Assembly, there was active participation and involvement from Member States of the Region of the Americas. Speaking at the plenary of the Assembly, Member States of the Americas highlighted actions taken in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and called for future prevention and preparedness activities to take into account the need for equitable access to vaccines and medicines. In terms of recognition for countries of the Americas, the National Malaria Component of the Ministry for Citizen's Power for Health of Nicaragua was awarded the United Arab Emirates Health Foundation Prize for its essential work carried out in the fight against malaria.

8. The agenda of the Assembly included general items related to technical and health issues, as well as administrative, budgetary, and institutional items.² As on previous occasions, these matters were dealt with in committees A and B, and in plenary sessions.

9. A list of selected resolutions and decisions adopted by the World Health Assembly that are of interest to the Region, the related resolutions of the Pan American Health Organization, and some of the implications that the Health Assembly resolutions have for the Region can be found in the Annex.³

Other Matters: Executive Board

10. The 151st Session of the Executive Board was held on 30 May 2022. The Chair of the Executive Board was Dr. Kerstin Vesna Petrič, of Slovenia. Colombia was elected as Vice-chair. Brazil, Canada, Paraguay, Peru, and the United States of America currently occupy the other five seats of the Board that represent the Region of the Americas. Furthermore, with the end of term of Argentina and Grenada, Peru and the United States of America will occupy the two seats of the Americas in the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee.

11. The agenda of the 151st Session of the Executive Board included items related to the Standing Committee on Health Emergency (Pandemic) Prevention, Preparedness and

¹ In accordance with World Health Assembly rules and procedure, a Director-General can be re-appointed once only.

² The agenda of the 75th World Health Assembly, as well as other related documents discussed at the Assembly, are available from: https://apps.who.int/gb/e/e_wha75.html

³ At the time of development of this report, the resolutions and decisions adopted by the Assembly were not available. The complete reference and a more exhaustive analysis of the implications of the WHO Resolutions for the Region will be presented to the 30th Pan American Sanitary Conference in September 2022.

Response, matters of management and governance, and staffing matters, among others.⁴ Member States adopted a decision approving the terms of reference of the Standing Committee on Health Emergency (Pandemic) Prevention, Preparedness and Response, which shall be composed of 14 members, two from each region, selected from among Executive Board members, as well as the Chair and a Vice-Chair of the Board. Delegates also adopted a decision related to the establishment of an agile Member State task group on strengthening WHO budgetary, programmatic, and financing governance. The Director-General was requested to convene the first meeting of the task group no later than the first week of July 2022.

12. Regarding dates for future sessions of the Executive Board and the Health Assembly, the Board agreed on the following timetable:

- a) The Programme, Budget and Administration Committee of the Executive Board to hold its thirty-seventh meeting from 25-27 January 2023 at WHO headquarters.
- b) The 152nd Session of the Executive Board to begin on 30 January 2023, at WHO headquarters, and to close no later than 7 February 2023.
- c) The Seventy-sixth World Health Assembly to be held at the Palais des Nations, in Geneva, starting on 21 May 2023 and closing no later than 30 May 2023.
- d) The Programme, Budget and Administration Committee of the Executive Board to hold its thirty-eighth meeting from 17-19 May 2023 at WHO headquarters.

Action by the Executive Committee

13. The Executive Committee is invited to take note of this report and provide any comments it deems pertinent.

Annex

References

1. World Health Organization. Director-General's address at the High-Level Welcome at the 75th World Health Assembly—22 May 2022 [Internet]. 75th World Health Assembly; 22 May 2022; Geneva, Switzerland. Geneva (Switzerland): WHO; 2022. Available from: <https://www.who.int/director-general/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-address-at-the-75th-world-health-assembly---22-may-2022>.

⁴ The full versions of these reports, as well as other related documents discussed at the 151st Session of the WHO Executive Board, are available from: https://apps.who.int/gb/e/e_eb151.html.

Annex¹

Table 1. Selected Resolutions Adopted by the 75th World Health Assembly, Documents of Reference, and Implications for the Region of the Americas

Resolution	Reference Documents	PAHO Resolutions and Documents	Implications for the Region
Revision of the Programme budget 2022-2023	<p>Programme budget 2022-2023: revision Documents A75/6, A75/7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Programme of Work results framework <p>Document A75/8 and resolution EB150.R4</p>	<p>OD363 and CD59.R8 (2021)</p> <p>Program Budget of the Pan American Health Organization 2022-2023</p>	<p>The revised Programme budget 2022-2023 reflects the rapidly changing health situation of the world due to the COVID-19 pandemic and is fully aligned with the Strengthening of WHO preparedness for and response to health emergencies (Resolution WHA74.7). It considers resource requirements to strengthen leadership, accountability, compliance and risk management with special focus on WHO's capacity for prevention and response to sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.</p> <p>The total budget increase of US\$ 604.4 million² represents a 14% increase over the approved Programme budget 2022-2023, and a 32% increase compared with the Programme budget 2020-2021. In terms of increases by strategic priorities: <i>a</i>) 67% of the proposed increase is concentrated in strategic priority 2 (One billion more people better protected from health emergencies); <i>b</i>) 15% for priority 1 (One billion more people benefiting from universal health coverage); and <i>c</i>) 13% for pillar 4 (More effective and efficient WHO providing better support to countries). Strategic priority 3 (One billion more people enjoying better health and well-being) has the least significant increase of the four strategic priorities, with 5%.</p>

¹ At the time of development of this report, the resolutions and decisions adopted by the Assembly were not available. The complete reference and a more exhaustive analysis of the implications of the WHO Resolutions for the Region will be presented to the 30th Pan American Sanitary Conference in September 2022.

² Unless otherwise indicated, all monetary figures in this document are expressed in United States dollars.

Table 2. Selected Decisions Adopted by the 75th World Health Assembly, Documents of Reference, and Implications for the Region of the Americas

Decision	Reference Documents	PAHO Resolutions and Documents	Implications for the Region
Sustainable financing	Sustainable financing: report of the Working Group Document A75/9	OD363 and CD59.R8 (2021) Program Budget of the Pan American Health Organization 2022-2023	The decision approves series of recommendations from the Working Group on Sustainable Financing, which aim to make WHO’s funding more predictable and flexible, and less dependent on voluntary contributions. Among the recommendations is a proposal to establish a Member States task group on strengthening WHO budgetary, programmatic and financing governance to analyze challenges in governance for transparency, efficiency, accountability and compliance. Additionally, the Secretariat is requested to develop budget proposals for an increase in assessed contributions (membership dues) to 50% of WHO’s core budget by 2030.
Strengthening WHO preparedness for and response to health emergencies	Strengthening WHO preparedness for and response to health emergencies Document A75/17	CD59/11 and CD59.R12 (2021) Strategy for Building Resilient Health Systems and Post COVID-19 Pandemic Recovery to Sustain and Protect Public Health Gains	The decision, with respect to targeted amendments to the International Health Regulations (2005), decided to continue the Working Group on strengthening WHO Preparedness and Response to Health Emergencies, with a revised mandate and new name—the Working Group on amendments to the International Health Regulations (2005) (WGIHR). The WGIHR is requested to work exclusively on consideration of proposed targeted amendments to the International Health Regulations (2005), consistent with decision EB150(3) (2022), for consideration by the Seventy-seventh World Health Assembly in 2024.
