

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE EIGHTH MEETING

(WHO Conference Hall, Manila)
Friday, 26 September 2008 at 09:00

CHAIRPERSON: Dr Francisco Duque III (Philippines)

CONTENTS

	page
1. Coordination of the work of the World Health Assembly, the Executive Board and the Regional Committee	200
2. Private and informal consultative meeting of representatives of Member States	201
3. Special Programme of Research, Development And Research Training in Human Reproduction: Membership of the Policy and Coordination Committee	202
4. Consideration of draft resolutions	203
4.1 Dengue fever and dengue haemorrhagic fever prevention and control	203
4.2 Protecting health from climate change	204
5. Time and place of the sixtieth and sixty-first sessions of the Regional Committee	207
6. Closure of the session	208

1. COORDINATION OF THE WORK OF THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY, THE EXECUTIVE BOARD AND THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE: Item 17 of the Agenda (Document WPR/RC59/11)

The DIRECTOR, PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT, introducing the item, noted that document WPR/RC59/11 referred to resolutions adopted by the Sixty-first World Health Assembly that were of particular significance for the Western Pacific Region. The resolutions themselves were attached to the document. He drew the attention of the Committee to the operative paragraphs, which related to activities Member States could undertake in the Region to implement the resolutions.

Resolution WHA61.4 addressed strategies to reduce the harmful use of alcohol and urged Member States to develop their own monitoring systems and report regularly to WHO's regional and global information systems. It also urged Member States to strengthen national responses to public health problems caused by the harmful use of alcohol. Following the adoption of the Regional Strategy to Reduce Alcohol-Related Harm at the fifty-seventh session of the Regional Committee, a Regional Plan of Action had been drafted for broader consultation and finalization.

Resolution WHA61.18 dealt with the achievement of the health-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and enumerated factors hindering progress, which included weak health systems, among others. It urged Member States to sustain high-level political commitment and to strengthen national health systems, including health information.

Resolution WHA61.20 noted the salient points of the biennial progress report for infant and young child nutrition that needed further consideration, particularly malnutrition. It urged Member States to undertake specific actions related to the promotion of breast-feeding and infant and young child nutrition, and the reduction of child mortality.

Dr REN (China) endorsed the implementation in the Region of the World Health Assembly resolutions on strategies to reduce the harmful use of alcohol, monitoring of the achievement of the health-related MDGs, and infant and young child nutrition. He appreciated the efforts of Member States in working for their adoption and looked to future discussions on their implementation by Member States in the Region. He also endorsed the implementation in the Region of the World Health Assembly resolutions on climate change and health, and implementation of the action plan on multilingualism. He suggested that the Regional Office and country offices should hold consultations with Member States on how best to widen WHO's use of Chinese and French in the Region, together with English.

Dr SHIMIZU (Japan) said, in relation to the health-related MDGs, that strengthened health systems were improving the health status of the Japanese people; important components were proper training for physicians and nurses, effective monitoring systems, and reliable information. He said that monitoring and evaluation were important processes in achieving the MDGs. Evidence for the formulation of policies and programmes, a process needing broad consensus, required accurate data and analysis. The Toyako Framework for Action on Global Health, with its action plans for achieving the MDGs, had been presented at the G8 Summit in July 2008, and efforts continued in Japan based on that Framework. As regards improving infant and young child nutrition, he said that Japan had, over many years, supported the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and promoted breast-feeding. He appreciated WHO's strong leadership and called for its continuation.

Ms ROCHE (New Zealand) said that New Zealand had helped in reaching agreement on the World Health Assembly resolution on the strategies to reduce the harmful use of alcohol, and had offered to host forthcoming consultations between WHO and Member States on those strategies. Regarding the call for an annual report on progress on the achievement of the health-related MDGs, she asked how that was to be done. She suggested that consideration be given to including such progress reports in the regular agenda of the annual session of the Regional Committee.

The DIRECTOR, PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT, in his response, said that the Regional Office was consulting with WHO Headquarters on a timetable for implementation of the action plan on multilingualism, which would be reported at the next session of the World Health Assembly. The volume of WHO publications being translated into Chinese had increased, and a WHO website in Chinese had been established. In October 2008, a team from WHO Headquarters, the Regional Office and the country office in Beijing, China, would meet with officials of the Ministry of Health, China, to discuss ways to improve WHO publications in Chinese. He appreciated the ongoing support from the Government of China in that area. On the suggestion to include progress towards the health-related MDGs as a regular agenda item for discussion by the Regional Committee, he said that he considered that its periodic rather than regular inclusion would be more appropriate, citing as an example the two-year interval between 2005 and 2007, the most recent years when the health-related MDGs had been on the agenda. He said that health issues relevant to the MDGs were regularly on the agenda of the Regional Committee.

The DIRECTOR, HEALTH SECTOR DEVELOPMENT, agreed that coordination of reporting on progress towards achieving the health-related Millennium Development Goals needed to be improved. A number of United Nations agencies were involved in the MDGs, including the development of the health-related Goals 4, 5 and 6. WHO Headquarters was having discussions on a regular basis with all United Nations agencies, and Member States would be regularly updated. The Western Pacific Regional Office would keep a close eye on proceedings to ensure that information on the regional situation and progress was conveyed to WHO Headquarters and that Member States received clear information in return. Globally, achievement of the health-related MDGs was behind schedule and, even although the Western Pacific Region was doing relatively well, further progress would require a greater focus on the more difficult issues and helping the poorest communities. He thanked the Government of Japan for placing health systems strengthening on the G8 agenda, as stronger health systems would be needed to achieving the health-related MDGs.

2. PRIVATE AND INFORMAL CONSULTATIVE MEETING OF REPRESENTATIVES OF MEMBER STATES

The CHAIRPERSON reported back to the Regional Committee on the discussions held at an informal consultative meeting of Member States with seats of government in the Region. The regional rotation of the post of Director-General had been discussed at the 122nd session of the Executive Board in January 2008, and the Board had requested regional committees to discuss the issue and reach a consensus that would guide it in its deliberations at its 124th session, to be held in January 2009. The Regional Director had sent Member States the most recent report from the Secretariat, which contained six options. During the informal meeting, the Legal Counsel had summarized six options, indicating that some Members of the Board felt that the current system for the nomination of the Director-General worked well and led to the nomination of the best candidate; it was therefore in no need of improvement. Regional rotation would turn a position

of a global nature into a position of a regional nature, would restrict the choice of the Board, and might not lead to the nomination of the best possible candidate. Other Members of the Board felt that the process was overshadowed by the difference in economic and political power of some regions, which were able to fully support their candidates. As a result, the process was fundamentally unfair because qualified candidates from certain regions did not have a chance to be properly considered. Regional rotation would address those imbalances. The meeting had discussed the document and had reached a clear consensus that the current system worked well and should not be changed. Regional rotation of the position of Director-General would distort the procedure and might make the position a regional one rather than a global one. There should be no barrier to the identification of the best qualified candidate. It was agreed that the Region should support Option 1: maintaining the status quo. The Chairperson proposed to the Regional Committee that the Regional Director should report to the Executive Board the views of the Region and its preference for maintaining the current system of nomination.

It was so decided.

The participants in the informal meeting had also discussed the procedure for nomination of the Regional Director, as laid down in the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee of the Western Pacific, and possible ways to improve that. Many Member States had emphasized the importance of maintaining a level playing field between countries of the Region with different levels of development and economic resources. Candidates should have a fair opportunity to present their respective visions and programmes to Member States and be able to travel throughout the Region to do so. The procedure for nomination of the Director-General, where candidates presented their views and were interviewed at a session of the Executive Board, might be used as a possible model. The Chairperson proposed to the Committee that an item on the procedure for nomination of the Regional-Director should be included in the agenda of the sixtieth session of the Regional Committee and that the Legal Counsel should prepare a report on ways to improve the fairness of the nomination procedure, including options to address issues raised by Member States, taking into account best practices in WHO and other United Nations agencies.

It was so decided.

3. SPECIAL PROGRAMME OF RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH TRAINING
IN HUMAN REPRODUCTION: MEMBERSHIP OF THE POLICY AND COORDINATION
COMMITTEE: Item 18 of the Agenda (Document WPR/RC59/12)

The DIRECTOR, PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT, explained that the Policy and Coordination Committee was the governing body of the WHO Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction. It had a total of 32 members in four categories:

- Category 1 (largest financial contributors);
- Category 2 (countries elected by the WHO Regional Committees);
- Category 3 (other interested Cooperating Parties); and
- Category 4 (Permanent Members).

Under Category 2, there were 14 Member States elected by the WHO Regional Committees for three-year terms, three of which were allocated to the Western Pacific Region. At present, the three Member States from the Western Pacific Region were Mongolia, the Republic of Korea and Singapore.

Since the term of office of Singapore would expire on 31 December 2008, the Regional Committee was requested to elect one Member State, whose three-year term would start on 1 January 2009, to succeed Singapore. In the election, due consideration should be given to a Member State's financial or technical support to the Special Programme and its interest in the field of human reproduction, as reflected in its national policies and programmes.

The Regional Committee might wish to select Japan to replace Singapore; the Policy and Coordination Committee would hold its 22nd annual meeting at WHO Headquarters from 18 to 20 June 2009.

It was so decided (see decision WPR/RC59(1)).

4. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

The Committee considered the following draft resolutions.

4.1 Dengue fever and dengue haemorrhagic fever prevention and control (Document WPR/RC59/Conf. Paper No. 5)

The RAPPORTEUR FOR THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE informed the Committee that several proposed amendments had been submitted. Papua New Guinea had proposed that operative paragraph 2(5) should be amended by inserting the words "intercountry, interagency," before "intersectoral". The United States of America had proposed that the words "and transparent" should be inserted after "regular", in the sixth preambular paragraph and in operative paragraph 2(3); that a new operative paragraph 2(5) should be added to read "to disaggregate the reporting of cases of the various subtypes of dengue within data reporting"; and that the words "and education" should be added after "community" in existing operative paragraph 2(5). Samoa had proposed the insertion of a new operative paragraph 2(3) to read "to continue strengthening primary health care and health promotion in the prevention and control of dengue fever"; and that in operative paragraph 3(1) the word "donors" should be replaced by "development partners". Samoa, noting the use of the terms "intersectoral" and "inter-programmatic" in the draft resolution, had also requested clarification regarding the difference between the terms "intersectoral" and "multisectoral" and between "inter-programmatic" and "multi-programmatic", and as to which terms would best reflect the Committee's discussions.

The DIRECTOR, PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT, said that, in his view, "inter-" conveyed the sense of collaboration between and among sectors or programmes and that "intersectoral" and "inter-programmatic" were therefore appropriate.

Decision: The resolution, as amended, was adopted (see resolution WPR/RC59.R6).

4.2 Protecting health from climate change (Document WPR/RC59/Conf. Paper No. 6)

The RAPPORTEUR FOR THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE announced that proposed amendments had been received from Australia and the United States of America. Australia proposed the deletion of operative paragraphs 2(1) and 2(2).

Ms BENNET (Australia), explaining her delegation's proposals, said that it would not be appropriate to place a burden on Member States with limited human and financial resources by urging them to undertake studies on the health implications of climate change when those resources would be better spent on relevant interventions at local level. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, WHO and other international organizations were already undertaking such studies, and Member States that had the required capacity and resources would do so in the course of developing their national plans and strategies, which was covered under operative paragraph 2(3). Operative paragraph 2(2) could be deleted for similar reasons; again Member States with the necessary capacity and resources would develop awareness-raising programmes and associated materials, and that was covered by operative paragraph 2(3) and to some extent also by operative paragraph 2(7).

Dr TALEMAITOGA (New Zealand) said that it would be preferable to maintain a reference to studies, which had been raised by several Member States, and suggested that it might be possible to incorporate some additional wording in operative paragraph 3 to the effect that under the leadership of the Regional Director the results of relevant studies would be disseminated to Member States. Moreover, some of the content of operative paragraph 2(2) might be incorporated in operative paragraph 3(3).

Mrs ARTHUR (France) said that, while most people were aware of climate change and its impact on agriculture, the implications for health were less widely understood. So although it would be unfair to burden Member States unduly, it would be preferable to retain a reference to studies in the draft resolution. Perhaps the Regional Office could be requested to pay particular attention to the needs of Member States with financial constraints.

Ms BENNET (Australia) said that Australia could accept changes along the lines suggested by the representatives of New Zealand and France through additional wording to be added to operative paragraph 3.

Dr TALEMAITOGA (New Zealand) proposed that operative paragraph 3(1) should be amended by adding the words "including making Member States aware of studies on the health impacts of climate change both from the Western Pacific Region and globally".

The REGIONAL DIRECTOR endorsed the inclusion of a reference to studies in operative paragraph 3 but suggested that it might be preferable to amend operative paragraph 3(1) by adding "to collaborate with other relevant international and regional organizations and Member States to undertake studies on the health implications of climate change" since, as already pointed out, many bodies were undertaking studies including those Member States with the necessary resources.

Dr TALEMAITOGA (New Zealand) proposed that the elements from operative paragraph 2(2), which could be deleted, should be transformed into a request to the Regional Director and included in operative

paragraphs 3(1) and or 3(2). The text could read: “to develop awareness-raising programmes and learning resource materials, including appropriate measures to reduce the health impact”.

The RAPPORTEUR FOR THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE suggested a reformulation: “to advocate a broad range of stakeholders on the potential health impact of climate change and appropriate measures to reduce the health impact”.

Ms ARTHUR (France) supported the New Zealand proposal to delete operative paragraph 2(2) and incorporate elements into paragraph 3(1) or 3(2).

The REGIONAL DIRECTOR agreed and suggested that the wording “to work with Member States to develop...” be used to introduce the text of operative paragraph 2(2), perhaps as a new subparagraph in operative paragraph 3.

Ms BENNET (Australia) supported that proposal.

The RAPPORTEUR FOR THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE said that the United States of America had proposed the following amendments. The words “with concern” should be added after “Recognizing” in the second preambular paragraph and the rest of the paragraph following “... Climate Change that” should be replaced by: “the effects of temperature increases on some aspects of human health are already being observed, and that the net global effect of projected climate change on human health is expected to be negative, especially in developing countries, small-island developing states and vulnerable local communities...”. A new preambular paragraph should be added after the sixth preambular paragraph: “Noting that WHO will present a draft workplan to the Executive Board at its 124th session on addressing the implications of climate change for health and health systems:”.

In operative paragraph 1, the word “ENDORSES” should be replaced by “ACKNOWLEDGES”, the word initial should be inserted before “guide” so that the phrase would read “an initial guide”, and the following wording should be added at the end of the existing text: “while noting that a global workplan is expected to be adopted by the Sixty-second World Health Assembly, to ensure coherence across WHO regions, a strong evidence base, and non-duplication of efforts”.

A new subparagraph 8 should be added to operative paragraph 2, reading: “to actively participate in the preparation of a workplan for scaling up WHO’s technical support to Member States for assessing and addressing the implications of climate change for health”.

Operative paragraph 3(5) should begin “to collaborate region-wide and with centres ...” and, after the word “monitor” the words “global mandates and” should be added. In operative paragraph 3(6) the words “, the private sector” should be added after “development assistance agencies”.

Ms BLACKWOOD (United States of America) added that she questioned the use of the term “psychosocial disorders” in the third preambular paragraph.

She explained that the wording for her delegation’s proposal for the second preambular paragraph was taken directly from resolution WHA61.19 on climate change and health and followed the wording used by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. That resolution referred to the scaling up of WHO’s technical support and the Regional Director had spoken of the dynamic process between the WHO regions

and Headquarters. Several of the proposals made recognized the global extent of the work and were intended to encourage Member States in the Region to contribute to global processes. The proposal to “acknowledge” the regional framework in operative paragraph 1 was intended to recognize that the issues would be further elaborated regionally and globally.

Her delegation had questions about the term “regional mechanisms”, hence the proposed alternative for the opening of operative paragraph 3(5).

Dr TALEMAITOGA (New Zealand) accepted the proposed changes to the preambular paragraphs. In operative paragraph 1, he urged retention of “ENDORSES” but accepted the other proposed changes. He agreed to the proposal for a new subparagraph 2(8). In operative paragraph 3(5) he agreed with the changes but suggested adding “including regional mechanisms” to the United States’ proposed text, because he took mechanisms to mean actions. He agreed to adding the reference to the private sector in operational paragraph 3(6).

Ms BENNET (Australia) did not agree to changing “ENDORSES” but accepted the proposal for a new preambular paragraph, the other proposed changes to operative paragraph 1, the new subparagraph 2(8), and the revised versions of operative paragraphs 3(5) and 3(6), although she wished to await the outcome of discussions about “mechanisms” in operative paragraph 3(5), as proposed by New Zealand.

Ms ARTHUR (France) said that she agreed with the United States’ proposals. The modified second preambular paragraph would better reflect the World Health Assembly resolution and the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel. She wished, however, to retain the verb “ENDORSES”.

Mr VILLAVARDE (Philippines) accepted the changes proposed to the preambular paragraphs and operative paragraph 3(6). In operative paragraph 1 he wished to retain “ENDORSES” and did not accept the insertion of the word “initial”. The framework could be adapted later in the light of any new developments reported to the Regional Committee.

The RAPPORTEUR FOR THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE proposed the following text for the start of operative paragraph 3(5): “to collaborate region-wide and with centres on mechanisms to share pertinent information ...”.

Dr TALEMAITOGA (New Zealand) said that that was acceptable.

Mrs BLACKWOOD (United States of America) said that she would agree to retain the word “ENDORSES” at the beginning of the first operative paragraph.

In response to the comment by the DIRECTOR, PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT, that introduction of the words “global mandates and” in operative paragraph 3(5) would be asking the Regional Director to exceed his responsibilities, the REGIONAL DIRECTOR proposed that the paragraph should start with the words “Taking into account the global mandates”.

Mrs BLACKWOOD (United States of America) agreed to that solution. She questioned use of the term “psychosocial disorders” in the third preambular paragraph. She agreed to a proposal by Dr Talemaitoga (New Zealand) to change the word “disorders” to “impacts”.

The RAPPORTEUR FOR THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE confirmed that the proposal to add the

word “initial” before “guide for planning” in the first operational paragraph had not been accepted by the Committee.

Elaborating on a proposal by Mrs Gidlow (Samoa) that the words “especially the low-lying atolls” be added at the end of the fifth preambular paragraph, the REGIONAL DIRECTOR said that, in order to cover all the countries in the Region, the words “especially Pacific island countries and areas” could be added to the end of the paragraph.

Mrs GIDLOW (Samoa) accepted that suggestion.

Decision: The resolution, as amended, was adopted (see resolution WPR/RC59.R7).

5. TIME AND PLACE OF THE SIXTIETH AND SIXTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE: Item 19 of the Agenda

The REGIONAL DIRECTOR told the Committee that the Regional Office had received an invitation to hold the sixtieth session of the Regional Committee in Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China.

Dr LAM Ping-Yan (Hong Kong, China) confirmed that Hong Kong (China) wished to host the sixtieth session of the Regional Committee. He said that although the arrangements made for recent sessions of the Regional Committee had set new benchmarks for hospitality, he was convinced that Hong Kong (China) would be able to make the session a memorable one. A short video presentation was made.

The REGIONAL DIRECTOR noted that the dates of all six regional committee sessions had to be coordinated, both to enable the Director-General to attend at least part of each one and to allow time for the discussions of those committees to be reflected in the documentation for the Executive Board meeting in January. He therefore proposed 21 to 25 September 2009 as the dates of the sixtieth session.

Dr REN Minghui (China) said that his Government supported the hosting of the sixtieth session of the Regional Committee in Hong Kong (China) on the dates proposed by the Regional Director.

The REGIONAL DIRECTOR said that an invitation had been received from the Government of Fiji to host the sixty-first session of the Regional Committee.

Dr LUVENI (Fiji) confirmed that her Government had offered to host the sixty-first session of the Regional Committee. She assured the Committee that her country was peaceful, secure and beautiful and continued to host many regional and subregional events. Although it was possible that a new Government would be in place by 2010, the commitment to host the Regional Committee session would be maintained.

The CHAIRPERSON asked the rapporteurs to prepare an appropriate draft resolution that reflected the venue and dates of the sixtieth session of the Regional Committee and the Committee’s appreciation to the Governments of Hong Kong (China) and Fiji for their kind offers to host, respectively, the sixtieth and sixty-first sessions of the Regional Committee.

Decision: The draft resolution was adopted (see resolution WPR/RC59.R8).

6. CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

Dr YANO (Palau), speaking on behalf of all the representatives present at the fifty-ninth session of the Regional Committee, proposed a resolution of appreciation, thanking the Government of the Republic of the Philippines for its hospitality, the office bearers elected by the Committee and the representatives of intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations for their statements.

Mr SADANADUM (Singapore), Ms ROCHE (New Zealand) and Mr TUIA (Tokelau) also expressed their appreciation for the excellent arrangements made for the meeting, which had resulted in it being exceptionally fruitful and useful.

Decision: The draft resolution was adopted (see resolution WPR/RC59.R9).

The REGIONAL DIRECTOR thanked the office bearers for their contributions to the success of the meeting. He said that the Region faced two types of challenge: the unfinished agenda of communicable and noncommunicable diseases, in which much progress had nevertheless been made; and the new challenges of health systems strengthening and the health effects of climate change. Foundations had already been laid with regard to the latter challenges, and he was convinced that the Region would become a global leader in meeting them.

He said that the previous 10 years had been fulfilling and rewarding, with achievements made and strong friendships forged. He paid tribute to his capable, dedicated staff and said that it had been an honour to have served two terms as Regional Director of the very special Region of the Western Pacific.

The CHAIRPERSON thanked the Regional Director for his leadership and welcomed Dr SHIN Young Soo, the Regional Director-nominee. He also thanked the senior officials of WHO, from both Headquarters and the Regional Office, and the staff at the Philippines Department of Health. He then declared the fifty-ninth session of the Regional Committee closed.

The meeting rose at 11:32.

word “initial” before “guide for planning” in the first operational paragraph had not been accepted by the Committee.

Elaborating on a proposal by Mrs Gidlow (Samoa) that the words “especially the low-lying atolls” be added at the end of the fifth preambular paragraph, the REGIONAL DIRECTOR said that, in order to cover all the countries in the Region, the words “especially Pacific island countries and areas” could be added to the end of the paragraph.

Mrs GIDLOW (Samoa) accepted that suggestion.

Decision: The resolution, as amended, was adopted (see resolution WPR/RC59.R7).

5. TIME AND PLACE OF THE SIXTIETH AND SIXTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE: Item 19 of the Agenda

The REGIONAL DIRECTOR told the Committee that the Regional Office had received an invitation to hold the sixtieth session of the Regional Committee in Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China.

Dr LAM Ping-Yan (Hong Kong, China) confirmed that Hong Kong (China) wished to host the sixtieth session of the Regional Committee. He said that although the arrangements made for recent sessions of the Regional Committee had set new benchmarks for hospitality, he was convinced that Hong Kong (China) would be able to make the session a memorable one. A short video presentation was made.

The REGIONAL DIRECTOR noted that the dates of all six regional committee sessions had to be coordinated, both to enable the Director-General to attend at least part of each one and to allow time for the discussions of those committees to be reflected in the documentation for the Executive Board meeting in January. He therefore proposed 21 to 25 September 2009 as the dates of the sixtieth session.

Dr REN Minghui (China) said that his Government supported the hosting of the sixtieth session of the Regional Committee in Hong Kong (China) on the dates proposed by the Regional Director.

The REGIONAL DIRECTOR said that an invitation had been received from the Government of Fiji to host the sixty-first session of the Regional Committee.

Dr LUVENI (Fiji) confirmed that her Government had offered to host the sixty-first session of the Regional Committee. She assured the Committee that her country was peaceful, secure and beautiful and continued to host many regional and subregional events. Although it was possible that a new Government would be in place by 2010, the commitment to host the Regional Committee session would be maintained.

The CHAIRPERSON asked the rapporteurs to prepare an appropriate draft resolution that reflected the venue and dates of the sixtieth session of the Regional Committee and the Committee’s appreciation to the Governments of Hong Kong (China) and Fiji for their kind offers to host, respectively, the sixtieth and sixty-first sessions of the Regional Committee.

Decision: The draft resolution was adopted (see resolution WPR/RC59.R8).

6. CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

Dr YANO (Palau), speaking on behalf of all the representatives present at the fifty-ninth session of the Regional Committee, proposed a resolution of appreciation, thanking the Government of the Republic of the Philippines for its hospitality, the office bearers elected by the Committee and the representatives of intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations for their statements.

Mr SADANADUM (Singapore), Ms ROCHE (New Zealand) and Mr TUIA (Tokelau) also expressed their appreciation for the excellent arrangements made for the meeting, which had resulted in it being exceptionally fruitful and useful.

Decision: The draft resolution was adopted (see resolution WPR/RC59.R9).

The REGIONAL DIRECTOR thanked the office bearers for their contributions to the success of the meeting. He said that the Region faced two types of challenge: the unfinished agenda of communicable and noncommunicable diseases, in which much progress had nevertheless been made; and the new challenges of health systems strengthening and the health effects of climate change. Foundations had already been laid with regard to the latter challenges, and he was convinced that the Region would become a global leader in meeting them.

He said that the previous 10 years had been fulfilling and rewarding, with achievements made and strong friendships forged. He paid tribute to his capable, dedicated staff and said that it had been an honour to have served two terms as Regional Director of the very special Region of the Western Pacific.

The CHAIRPERSON thanked the Regional Director for his leadership and welcomed Dr SHIN Young Soo, the Regional Director-nominee. He also thanked the senior officials of WHO, from both Headquarters and the Regional Office, and the staff at the Philippines Department of Health. He then declared the fifty-ninth session of the Regional Committee closed.

The meeting rose at 11:32.
