

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE EIGHTH MEETING

WHO Conference Hall, Manila
Monday, 25 September 1989 at 9 a.m.

CHAIRMAN: Dr A.R. Bengzon (Philippines)

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1. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

The Committee considered the following draft resolution:

1.1 Planning and managing finances for health: (Document WPR/RC40/Conf. Paper No. 13)

Decision: The draft resolution was adopted (see resolution WPR/RC40.R15).

2. TIME AND PLACE OF THE FORTY-FIRST AND FORTY-SECOND SESSIONS OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE: Item 22 of the Agenda

The REGIONAL DIRECTOR said that an invitation had been received to hold the forty-second session of the Regional Committee in Japan.

Mr ONISHI (Japan) confirmed that Japan had written requesting the honour of hosting the forty-second session of the Regional Committee. It was as long ago as 1977 that Japan had last hosted the Committee, and the holding of the forty-second session there would be a means of intensifying the interest of the people of Japan in WHO. It would also be appropriate for the Committee to be held in Dr Nakajima's homeland during his third year of office as Director-General. It would be difficult for Japan to match the magnificent hospitality of the Philippines, but it would certainly do its best - including ensuring the comfort of all representatives in the Japanese winter climate. If the invitation were accepted, he would propose that the session be held from Tuesday to Tuesday, to include a weekend.

The CHAIRMAN thanked the representative of Japan for the invitation and, noting the Committee's acceptance, requested the Rapporteurs to prepare an appropriate draft resolution.

The REGIONAL DIRECTOR suggested that the dates of the Committee's forty-first session should be from 10 to 14 September 1990; that would ensure that the dates of the six regional committees overlapped as little as possible, thereby enabling the Director-General to attend at least part of them all.

However, if the Executive Board decided in January 1990 that meetings of the governing bodies should be rescheduled forthwith and the next session of the Regional Committee was to be held early in 1991, he would propose one of the following alternatives, in order to avoid the Chinese New Year (18 February): 28 January to 1 February, or 4 to 8 February. In both cases, the session would open on a Monday and close on a Friday.

In accordance with resolution WPR/RC24.R10, which stipulated that sessions should not be held outside Manila in two consecutive years, the forty-first session would be held at the Regional Office in Manila. In that connection, he drew attention to the fact that informal consultations were being held with three governments wishing to host future sessions. The Committee might therefore wish to consider at its next session whether it wished to maintain the provisions of resolution WPR/RC24.R10, adopted in 1973.

Replying to a query raised by Mrs Smail (New Zealand), he explained that sessions were normally held from Monday to Friday to keep to the minimum the absence of representatives from their countries. However, when a Member State hosted the Committee, the session was usually held from Tuesday to Monday, to enable representatives to visit some of the country's projects.

The CHAIRMAN noted that the Committee agreed that the dates of its forty-first session would be 10 to 14 September 1990 - or 28 January to 1 February 1991, if the sessions of governing bodies were rescheduled.

3. STATEMENTS BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED NATIONS, THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES, INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN OFFICIAL RELATIONS WITH WHO: Item 23 of the Agenda

At the invitation of the CHAIRMAN, statements were presented by the following intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations:

South Pacific Commission;
World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesiologists;
World Council of Churches - Christian Medical Commission;
World Federation for Medical Education;
International Union of Nutritional Sciences;
International Council of Societies of Pathology.

The CHAIRMAN acknowledged statements received for circulation to Member States from the following:

United Nations Children's Fund;
United Nations Population Fund;
International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness and Helen Keller International, Inc.;
International Society for Burn Injuries;
International Dental Federation;
International Association for Maternal and Neonatal Health;
International Pediatric Association;
International Planned Parenthood Federation;
International Council of Women.

The REGIONAL DIRECTOR suggested that the Committee should now meet privately to deal with the issue that had not been resolved at the informal meeting on Thursday, 21 September.

It was so agreed.

The meeting was suspended at 10 a.m. and resumed at 11 a.m.

4. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (resumed)

The Committee considered the following draft resolution:

4.1 Forty-first and forty-second sessions of the Regional Committee (Document WPR/RC40/Conf. Paper No. 14)

Decision: The draft resolution was adopted (see resolution WPR/RC40.R16).

5. RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION

Dr ABDULLAH (Malaysia), seconded by Dr VAREA (Fiji), proposed a draft resolution of appreciation.

Decision: The draft resolution was adopted (see resolution WPR/RC40.R17).

6. CLOSURE OF THE SESSION: Item 24 of the Agenda

The REGIONAL DIRECTOR presented the Chairman with a gavel set in commemoration of his chairmanship of the fortieth session of the Regional Committee.

The CHAIRMAN thanked the Regional Director for the presentation.

In accordance with the procedure agreed by the Regional Committee in 1981, the draft report would be sent to representatives for their approval.

His country, his department and he personally had deeply appreciated the excellent collaboration enjoyed with the Regional Director and his staff during the preparations for the session - a reminder of the continuing friendship and collaboration between the Member States and the Regional Office. He also expressed appreciation to the Vice-Chairman and Rapporteurs for their work during the session and to those concerned in the Philippine Department of Health and other governmental and nongovernmental agencies for their work during the preparations and during the session itself. Particular thanks should go to the representatives, without whom the session would not have been so productive.

There were many things he would remember about the fortieth session and he would treasure the gavel set he had received. The session had proved pleasant, productive and promising because the participants had made it so. The Chair was only a mirror reflecting the thoughts, desires and aspirations as well as the certainties and doubts of participants. At the same time, the Chair was a searchlight trying to illuminate uncharted areas, to push back frontiers and to go in directions where there was no clear path or consensus.

A view which reflected his own philosophy was that the remainder of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first would be the "Pacific era", which would place the WHO Western Pacific Region in a unique position. The Region presented a variety of situations and that diversity in itself presented great promise. It was the responsibility of Member States to fulfil that promise. In order to do so, Member States of the Region should ensure that they maintained their solidarity. However, such solidarity was not automatic, it had to be carefully nurtured.

In carrying out his responsibilities, he had been confident of the common respect and goodwill among the Member States, so that even when there had been debate - as there should be - it had only served to strengthen that solidarity.

Technically speaking he would remain Chairman of the Regional Committee until the start of the forty-first session, and as such he hoped to maintain contact with representatives during the year. As he had said in his opening address, the building of solidarity should not only take place during the annual sessions of the Regional Committee.

Being a neurologist, he reminded members that humans had a part of the brain called the temporal lobe, where life's experiences were buried and from which memories could be evoked. If he should be unsure or in need of support during the coming year, he would look back and draw strength from his memories of the session.

He declared the fortieth session of the Regional Committee closed.

The meeting rose at 11.20 a.m.