



directing council

PAN AMERICAN
SANITARY
ORGANIZATION

IX Meeting

Antigua Guatemala
September 1956

regional committee

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION

VIII Meeting



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Topic 32: PROPOSED ACTION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF NICARAGUA WITH RESPECT TO REGIONAL REPRESENTATION ON THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

Antigua Guatemala, Guatemala
20 September 1956

Dr. Carlos L. González
Secretary of the IX Meeting of the Directing Council
of the Pan American Sanitary Organization
Antigua Guatemala, Guatemala

Mr. Secretary:

In accordance with the decision taken at the first plenary session of the Council, approving the inclusion on the agenda of a proposal from the Government of Nicaragua concerning regional representation on the Executive Board of the World Health Organization, I transmit herewith the text of our document on the subject, with the request that it be brought to the attention of the representatives and that the General Committee include it on the order of business of whatever session it may deem advisable.

Sincerely yours,

(signed)
Dr. Germán Castillo
Chief, Delegation of Nicaragua

Annex

PROPOSED ACTION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF NICARAGUA WITH RESPECT
TO REGIONAL REPRESENTATION ON THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

Under the terms of the Constitution of the World Health Organization, its Executive Board is elected "taking into account an equitable geographical distribution." In this manner, the text of the Constitution establishes the principle of representation from the various regions of the world. By virtue of that principle, at the Ninth World Health Assembly in May of this year Nicaragua was proposed as a candidate to fill one of the two vacancies created by the termination of the periods of office of two other countries of the Region of the Americas. Although it received the unanimous vote of the Latin American countries attending the Assembly, Nicaragua was not elected because the majority of the representatives of other regions did not give it their vote.

We believe that a country that is present, that has met all the requirements for membership in the WHO, and that has the support and unanimous vote of the countries of its Region should, logically, occupy the post for which those countries have designated it. To act otherwise would be to go against the very principle of regional representation and to ignore the wishes expressed by the members of a Region that have clearly indicated their choice of the country that should, in a certain manner, assume their representation, taking into account the "equitable geographical distribution" that should be maintained in the membership of the Executive Board of the WHO.

Under these circumstances, the Government of Nicaragua sent a communication to the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau requesting the inclusion on the agenda of the present Directing Council meeting, of a topic providing for the study of the question of modifying the WHO Constitution in such a way as to establish more concrete provision, in accordance with the statements made above, for regional representation on the Executive Board of the WHO, so as to ensure that the designation made previously for that purpose by the Member Countries of a given Region will be respected.

The Government of Nicaragua hoped that this proposal would meet with the support of the Directing Council of the PASO, that the Council would concur in it and propose to the next World Health Assembly the requested revision in the WHO Constitution.

Before including the proposed topic on the agenda of the current meeting, the Director of the Bureau transmitted to the Government of Nicaragua,

in a communication dated 24 August, certain considerations on specific aspects of the question. In so doing, the Director made no attempt whatever to prejudge the advisability of the proposed action, but rather suggested the appropriate channel to be followed in this case and pointed out the advisability of the Nicaraguan Government's addressing the Director-General of the WHO to present the pertinent constitutional amendment in concrete terms, without prejudice to having the proposal set forth also in a draft resolution, in the event the Government of Nicaragua still considered it necessary to submit it to the Directing Council of the PASO for consideration.

This latter course is deemed appropriate by the Government of Nicaragua, while at the same time it accepts the Director's suggestion that it communicate directly with the World Health Organization. This view was set forth in its reply to the above-mentioned communication of the Director, a reply which we are informed has not yet been received.

Consequently, the Government of Nicaragua announces its attention to present to the WHO, in accordance with the proper procedures, a proposal designed to obtain such statutory or procedural amendments as are necessary to regulate the election of its Executive Board in such a way as to take into account the wishes expressed by the members of a Region and assure proper regional representation, in accordance with the views set forth in this communication.

At the same time, however, as it has stated, it is the wish of the Government of Nicaragua that this question be considered by the Directing Council of the PASO, and in this connection the Delegation of Nicaragua is highly gratified by the encouraging decision of the Council to include this topic in its agenda.

With the ultimate solution of the matter thus left within the competence of the WHO, the Government of Nicaragua will confine itself for the moment to requesting that the Directing Council, insofar as it is within its competence, approve the following:

Draft Resolution

The Directing Council,

Having been apprised of the intention of the Government of Nicaragua to present to the World Health Organization, in due form, a proposal for the adoption of the necessary statutory or procedural amendments to provide that, in the election of its Executive Board, the wishes expressed by the members of a Region will be taken into account, so that proper regional representation will be assured,

RESOLVES:

To take note of the proposed action of the Government of Nicaragua, and to express its sympathy with this proposal and with the principle of respect for regional representation that inspired it.