

directing council



PAN AMERICAN
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION

XXIV Meeting

regional committee

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



XXVIII Meeting

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

(submitted by Dr. Orontes Avilés, Nicaragua, Chairman of the 75th and 76th Meetings of the Executive Committee)

The 75th Meeting of the Executive Committee was held in Washington, D.C., at the Headquarters of the Organization, on 7 October 1975. The Committee welcomed the Representatives of the three new Members of the Committee, Bahamas, Colombia and Costa Rica, elected to fill the vacancies caused by the expiry of the terms of office of Haiti, Mexico and Panama. Also in attendance at the 75th Meeting were the Representatives of Argentina, Bolivia, Cuba, Jamaica, Nicaragua and the United States of America.

The Committee elected the following officers: Chairman, Dr. Orontes Avilés (Nicaragua); Vice Chairman, Dr. Pedro R. Yáñez (Argentina); and Rapporteur, Dr. Lenín Sáenz (Costa Rica). Bahamas was elected member of the Award Committee for the PAHO Award for Administration, replacing Haiti.

The agenda of the meeting was short. On one item, the relationship between PAHO and the Caribbean Community, included on the agenda at the request of the latter, the Committee asked the Director to conduct a study and report to the 76th Meeting.

The Executive Committee held its 76th Meeting from 21 to 29 June 1976, a total of seven working days (13 plenary sessions and a closing session). It thus ranks as one of the shortest meetings in recent years. The Committee was attended by Representatives of the following Members: Argentina, Bahamas, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Jamaica, Nicaragua, and the United States of America. France, Guatemala, Paraguay, and Surinam were represented by observers, as was the Inter-American Development Bank.

In the absence of the Vice-Chairman and the Rapporteur, the Committee elected Dr. Wilbert J. Smith Wilson (Jamaica) Vice-Chairman pro tempore and Mrs. Marlyn Kefauver (United States of America) Rapporteur pro tempore.

Many of the items considered by the Executive Committee are now before the Directing Council. Some have been referred to the Council by the Committee for decision, others for information only. My colleagues from the Executive Committee and/or I are prepared to summarize the views of the Committee on each item as it comes to the attention of the Council. Delegates may remember that in October 1975, the XXIII Meeting of the Directing Council, in Resolution XXVIII, welcomed two additional members of the Executive Committee to assist the Chairman in reporting the views of the Committee to the Directing Council.

As complete reports will be made to the Council as each item is considered, I will confine this report to very brief comments on the highlights of the Committee's 76th meeting, and to a few words about the more important issues discussed. I would also like to briefly describe the Committee's actions on a small number of items that are not on the agenda of this meeting of the Council.

The Committee devoted nine sessions to a very detailed examination of the Director's proposed program and budgets for 1977, 1978 and 1979. The Committee heard the Director's general presentation and the presentations of the chiefs of the six new Divisions of the Headquarters Office, as well as from other members of the professional staff. Thus, the substantive program budgets were reviewed in detail, as well as the programs and budgets for each country in the Americas in which the Organization provides services. The Director's program and budget, contained in Official Document 141, would provide for fiscal year 1977 an amount of US\$28,868,415 in PAHO regular funds. This represents an increase of 8.2 per cent over the amount appropriated for 1976. You will remember that the 1976 appropriation was 12.8 per cent above that for 1975, thus the increase proposed for 1977 is substantially lower than that approved for 1976. The Director pointed out that the 1977 increase does not cover the increased costs occasioned by inflationary factors. Indeed, the 1977 proposal for PAHO and WHO regular funds together provides for a total of 10 fewer posts than the 1976 appropriation. Thus, there will apparently be a slight net decrease in program activities financed by PAHO and WHO regular funds due to inflation. The Committee recommends to the Directing Council that it approve, without change, the proposed appropriation and assessment resolutions appearing on pages 6 and 7 of Official Document 141.

The Committee heard reports from the Director on quota collections and the annual Financial Report. It was noted that the Organization's financial position is sound. Indeed, the cash position is better than at corresponding times in recent years. The Council will hear complete reports on these two items.

The Committee examined a very important report of a Working Group appointed by the Director to study methods for the formulation of the program

and budget of the Pan American Health Organization. This Working Group, consisting of Dr. Arnold de Villiers of Canada and Dr. Alfredo Arreaza Guzmán of Venezuela, submitted a very interesting report which is now before the Directing Council for study and discussion. This subject arose during the course of the 74th Meeting of the Executive Committee, in June 1975, and the Committee considers it to be of importance. My colleagues and I are prepared to summarize the discussion of the Committee when the item is before the Council.

Discussions on the functions of the Executive Committee, initiated by the Executive Committee at its 70th Meeting, were continued. Discussion was continued at the 76th Meeting in response to Resolution XXVIII of the XXIII Meeting of the Directing Council in 1975, which urged the Committee, on its own initiative, to undertake studies of specific programs of the Organization. The Director has collaborated fully in this directive, and proposes to invite Members of the Committee to participate in the updating of the statement on the "PAHO Technical Cooperation Program" which appears on pages 1-3 of Official Document 141. He will also invite Members of the Committee to review the program areas identified by the Committee as worthy of study. These program areas, identified in Resolution XVI, are malaria, interregional projects, multinational centers, and the fellowship program.

The Committee heard a report on PAHO/WHO's efforts to assist the Government of Guatemala following the disastrous earthquake of 4 February 1976. The Council will hear a similar report and, hopefully, a report from the Delegate of Guatemala on the Government's activities to protect the health of the large number of people affected by the earthquake.

The Chief of the Latin American Center for Perinatology and Human Development, Dr. R. Caldeyro-Barcia, gave an excellent report on the activities of the Center. The Center has made significant contributions to medical knowledge on labor, childbirth and neonatal life. Valuable technical assistance and training is being made available to the countries by the Center. The Executive Committee congratulates Dr. Caldeyro-Barcia and his staff.

The Executive Committee was very pleased to review the application of Surinam for full membership in the Pan American Health Organization. The application of Surinam is before the Council for action and the Committee recommends its prompt approval.

The Secretary General of the Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM) has suggested the possibility of a formal relationship between the Organization and CARICOM. The Committee studied the proposal and, in Resolution XX, requested the Director to consult with the Ministers of Health of the Caribbean and with CARICOM in order to clarify what the Caribbean Community Secretariat expects from an agreement between CARICOM and PAHO. The Director was requested to report on the matter to the Executive Committee at its 78th Meeting in 1977 so that the Committee may make an appropriate recommendation to the Directing Council.

At the request of the Directing Council at its XXII Meeting, the Committee studied the possibility of reduction of the length of meetings of the Directing Council. This item was discussed in some depth, and the Committee's representatives will summarize its views when the item is considered by the Council.

The Delegation of Costa Rica introduced a proposal for the establishment of a Pan American Community Health Training Center, which was discussed at length. The Committee felt that the proposal of Costa Rica deserved further and more intensive study. In Resolution VI it asked the Director to carry out a feasibility study for the consideration of this Meeting of the Directing Council.

The XIX Pan American Sanitary Conference, in Resolution XXIII, requested the Director to carry out further studies on continuing education activities sponsored by Governments, and to report thereon to a future meeting of the Executive Committee. Accordingly, the Director reported to the 76th Meeting of the Committee on this subject. After a full discussion of the report, the Committee adopted Resolution XXVI, which requested the Director to continue his efforts to mobilize national and international resources in this field; requested the Director to arrange for the inclusion, in projects for extension of health coverage, of a continuing education component; and invited Governments to study their own needs with respect to continuing education and to establish the necessary structures for efficient intercountry cooperation and exchange.

The Director suggested to the Committee, and will recommend to the Council, that it urge Member Countries to terminate routine smallpox vaccination requirements for international travelers in the Americas. In Resolution XXVII, the Committee endorses the recommendation that the Council urge Member Countries to take the necessary action.

Finally, the Executive Committee discussed plans for the celebration of the 75th Anniversary of the Pan American Health Organization. Within Resolution XXVIII is a draft resolution for consideration by the Directing Council. This resolution would designate 1977 as "Community Participation in Health Year," and recommends to Governments that they issue commemorative postage stamps in 1977, requests the Director to prepare a special program in celebration of "Community Participation in Health Year," and would authorize the use of available savings for the activities related to that program.

These were the most significant matters acted upon by the Executive Committee. For those items which will be considered by the Directing Council, the Representatives of the Committee are ready to provide the Council with any further information it may desire on the views of the Committee.