

*executive committee of  
the directing council*



PAN AMERICAN  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION

*working party of  
the regional committee*

WORLD  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION



76th Meeting  
Washington, D.C.  
June-July 1976

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Provisional Agenda Item 15

CE76/15, Rev. 1 (Eng.)  
14 June 1976  
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

STUDY OF THE TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS

Background

The XIX Pan American Sanitary Conference (1974) adopted Resolution XLIV, which reads as follows:

THE XIX PAN AMERICAN SANITARY CONFERENCE,

Considering it desirable to study ways of ensuring that the Technical Discussions produce the best results for the Member States,

RESOLVES:

1. To ask the Director of the Bureau to include this subject among the topics to be discussed at the 74th Meeting of the Executive Committee.
2. To instruct the Executive Committee to study all aspects of the Technical Discussions, particularly those relating to the procedures used in conducting them, and to report thereon to the XXIII Meeting of the Directing Council, XXVII Meeting of the Regional Committee of WHO for the Americas, with a view to a decision being taken on the matter.

The request for the study grew out of a rather general feeling among the Delegates to the Conference that the Technical Discussions were not as stimulating nor as productive of ideas as they might be. There was particular concern over the small number of delegates participating in the discussions, which was taken as an indication of their failure to meet their full potential.

At its 74th Meeting, the Executive Committee studied the matter with considerable care. In Resolution XLI, the Committee essentially made two recommendations to the Directing Council:

1. It recommended that the Technical Discussions be continued at future sessions of the Conference and of the Council; and
2. It recommended to the Council that it adopt a series of proposed amendments to the Rules for Technical Discussions. The amendments proposed would have provided for selection of the topic for the Technical Discussions two years in advance, for the selection to be made by the Director, in consultation with the Chairman of the Executive Committee, for appointment of the moderator one year in advance by the Executive Committee, and for other less significant changes.

Action of the Directing Council

The Directing Council at its XXIII Meeting discussed the Executive Committee's recommendations in some detail. The Council accepted the Committee's recommendation to continue the Technical Discussions at future meetings of the Council and the Conference. It declined, however, to amend the Rules for Technical Discussions, as recommended by the Committee, and remanded the issue of rule changes to the Executive Committee for further study. Resolution XXVII of the XXIII Meeting of the Directing Council reads as follows:

THE DIRECTING COUNCIL,

Having studied Document CD23/16 and its Annex I (CE74/9, Rev. 2) on the Study of the Technical Discussions carried out by the Executive Committee; and

Agreeing with the Executive Committee that the Technical Discussions have an intrinsic and significant value in the development of the programs of the Organization,

RESOLVES:

1. To continue to hold the Technical Discussions at each meeting of the Conference or the Council, as has been done up to the present.
2. To note with satisfaction the study and the documents of the Executive Committee and the recommendations made in them.
3. To instruct the Executive Committee to continue to study the matter thoroughly, with due regard to the observations made at the present Meeting.

A careful perusal of the minutes of the discussion on this topic in the XXIII Meeting of the Directing Council reveals the following repeatedly expressed views:

1. Many Members of the Council expressed their satisfaction with the way in which the Technical Discussions were conducted at the XXIII Meeting of the Council. This was cited as evidence that the Discussions could be satisfying to the Delegates under existing rules and procedures. Indeed, the Director had decided to prepare for the Discussions in such a way as to maximize discussion by delegates and to restrict formal presentations to the minimum.
2. Several delegates felt that the Council should retain the function of selecting the topics for the Technical Discussions.
3. Many delegates stated quite strongly that they do desire the material prepared earlier than it has been available in the past, in order to provide more time for study and preparation for the Discussions.

Possible Action by the Executive Committee

1. No action is necessary with respect to the continuation of the Technical Discussions at meetings of the Conference and the Council. Resolution XXVII of the XXIII Meeting of the Directing Council is clear and unequivocal in expressing the decision of the Council that the Discussions continue to be held.
2. With respect to the Rules of Procedure for Technical Discussions, the discussion in the Council clearly reflects the opinion that the subjects of the Discussions should continue to be selected by the Directing Council or the Conference. The Council also seemed to feel that documentation should be available to the delegates earlier than it has been in the past.

Under the existing rules, it is difficult to prepare the necessary documentation and make it available to delegates earlier than present practice. A change in current rules to provide for the selection of topics two years in advance would make it possible to prepare documentation much earlier and to transmit it to the governments. Should the Executive Committee wish to recommend this change to the Directing Council, the Annex contains suggested wording for an appropriate amendment to Rule 7 of the Rules for Technical Discussions.

Annex

Proposed Resolution

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,

Having further studied the procedures for conducting the Technical Discussions, at the request of the Directing Council at its XXIII Meeting;

After considering the record of the debate on this topic in the XXIII Meeting of the Directing Council; and

Believing that selection of the topics for Technical Discussions should be made two years in advance,

RESOLVES:

To recommend to the Directing Council that it adopt the following resolution:

THE DIRECTING COUNCIL,

Having studied the report of the Executive Committee recommending an amendment to the Rules for Technical Discussions,

RESOLVES:

1. To amend Rule 7 of the Rules for Technical Discussions by deleting the words "each year" in line 2 and inserting the words "by two years" immediately following the word "preceding" in line 3.
2. To select a topic for the Technical Discussions to take place at the XXV Meeting of the Directing Council in 1977 and another for the Discussions to take place at the XX Pan American Sanitary Conference in 1978.