



PAN AMERICAN  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION

XXV Meeting

WORLD  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION



XXIX Meeting

Washington, D.C.  
September-October 1977

INDEXED

Provisional Agenda Item 20

CD25/5 (Eng.)  
11 August 1977  
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

STUDY ON REDUCTION OF THE LENGTH OF MEETINGS OF THE DIRECTING COUNCIL

In accordance with Resolution XXIX of the Directing Council at its XXIV Meeting held in Mexico in October 1976, the Director is pleased to report to the Directing Council on the study to reduce the duration of meetings of the Council.

This matter was again considered by the Executive Committee at its 78th Meeting in June 1977, at the request of the Directing Council. The working document presented to the Executive Committee and the resolution passed by that Body are annexed.

In summary, it seemed to be the opinion of the Executive Committee that, as the Directing Council adopts its own agenda and since the size of the agenda has considerable bearing on the duration of the meeting, control of the time spent in a Directing Council meeting is in the hands of the Directing Council itself. The Director and the Executive Committee are already making a conscious attempt to keep the number of agenda items and resolutions to a minimum. The Executive Committee also felt that its expanded role is contributing significantly to a reduction in the time needed for meetings of the Directing Council, and that further time savings will be achieved if and when a biennial budget cycle is introduced.

The Director summed up the findings of his study to the Executive Committee as follows: "Within PAHO it would appear that, on the subject of the Directing Council, a consensus may be found to exist on the proposition that each Directing Council must consider the possibility of minimizing the duration of its meeting as an unstated aspiration but not as a rule, since, as we know, each Directing Council is constitutionally free to adopt its own agenda and to discuss it as thoroughly as it likes."

Annexes



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF  
THE DIRECTING COUNCIL

PAN AMERICAN  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION

78th Meeting

WORKING PARTY OF  
THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE

WORLD  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION



78th Meeting

RESOLUTION XVI

REDUCTION OF LENGTH OF MEETINGS OF THE DIRECTING COUNCIL

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,

Having studied Document CE78/6 prepared by the Director on the reduction of the length of meetings of the Directing Council;

Believing that the duration of meetings of the Council should be the outcome of decisions on agenda items and of analysis and debate of each sufficient to allow it to fulfill its vital role in guiding the Organization towards fulfillment of its goals;

Recognizing that it is the responsibility of the Directing Council at each of its meetings to determine its own program of work for that particular meeting, in accordance with the provisions of Article 12.C of the Constitution of the Pan American Health Organization; and

Convinced that the Rules of Procedure of the Directing Council should not be changed for this purpose,

RESOLVES:

1. To take note of Document CE78/6 prepared by the Director on the reduction of the length of meetings of the Directing Council.
2. To transmit this document to the Directing Council at its XXV Meeting with the recommendation that a decision be taken on this matter that does not compromise the vital role played by the Directing Council in the achievement of the goals of the Organization.

(Approved at the twelfth plenary session,  
20 June 1977)



*executive committee of  
the directing council*

PAN AMERICAN  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION

*working party of* CD25/5 (Eng.)  
*the regional committee* ANNEX II

WORLD  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION



78th Meeting  
Washington, D.C.  
June 1977

Provisional Agenda Item 13

CE78/6 (Eng.)  
3 May 1977  
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

REDUCTION OF LENGTH OF MEETINGS OF THE DIRECTING COUNCIL

The question of how a reduction in the length of meetings of the Directing Council might be effected has been under study by the Governing Bodies since the matter was first raised at the XXIII Meeting of the Directing Council in October 1975. No positive conclusions have as yet been reached.

The Executive Committee, at its 76th Meeting, considered the study made by the Director in compliance with a request of the Directing Council, and made two specific recommendations: (1) that no changes be made in the Rules of Procedure of the Directing Council; and (2) that the debate on the most important policy issues be held during the first week of each meeting.

The Directing Council, at its XXIV Meeting held in Mexico City in October 1976, took note of these recommendations and a further exchange of ideas ensued. The Council did not agree that discussion of policy matters could be programed solely for the first week of a meeting, and felt that assigning a specific day to the Technical Discussions would be restrictive. In Resolution XXIX, the Directing Council asked the Director to continue to study the matter and to report again to the Committee and the Council in 1977.

The report of the Working Group established by the XXIII Meeting of the Directing Council (Document CD23/30) and the study carried out by the Director (Document CE76/19) (annexed) contain a wide range of possible measures for reducing the length of Directing Council meetings. Other measures that might result in a reduction in the duration of meetings include the introduction of a biennial budget cycle and utilization of PAHO Area and Country Representatives to brief delegates prior to a meeting. Inherent in the latter proposal is the early mailing of documents by the Secretariat and their thorough study by participants in advance of the meeting. This should allow for more concise presentations by the technical and administrative staff of the Bureau and a reduction in the time required for discussion of each item.

A copy of the debate at the XXIV Meeting of the Directing Council is attached for the information of the Committee.

Annexes

*directing council*

PAN AMERICAN  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION

XXIII Meeting

Washington, D.C.  
September-October 1975

*regional committee*

WORLD  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION

XXVII Meeting

CE78/6 (Eng.)  
ANNEX I



CD23/30 (Eng.)  
3 October 1975  
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP TO STUDY THE POSSIBILITY OF REDUCING THE LENGTH  
OF DIRECTING COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Working Group to study the possibility of reducing the length of Directing Council meetings met on 30 September and 1 October 1975, at 6:00 p.m.

The membership of the Group was as follows: Dr. Pedro R. Yañez (Argentina), Dr. Hermán Weinstok W. (Costa Rica), Dr. Lenín Sáenz J. (Costa Rica), Dr. José Otero M. (Cuba), Dr. S. Paul Ehrlich, Jr. (United States of America), and Dr. Rogelio Valladares (Venezuela). Dr. Hermán Weinstok W. was elected Chairman.

The Group considered and discussed the following points proposed by its members as a basis for reducing the length of the Council meetings:

1. Delegation of a greater degree of responsibility and more functions to the Executive Committee, particularly as regards the study of the budget, to enable each of the nine Members of the Executive Committee, with knowledge of the budgets of specific countries, to make a more concrete contribution with regard to those budgets.
2. The Executive Committee study some of the items normally submitted to the Council.
3. Limitation of the number of agenda items.
4. Establishment of two main committees working simultaneously, along the lines of the Pan American Sanitary Conference.
5. Holding the Technical Discussions on Saturday.
6. Holding the Technical Discussions at the same time as the sessions of the Council, in which case the countries would undertake to designate technical experts specifically to take part in them.
7. Working documents and comments on them to be very concise; presentations to be expanded at the specific request of the Delegates.

8. Establishment of working groups for the specific study of certain subjects with membership automatically provided by the countries in strictly alphabetical order.
9. The number of hours of sessions of the Council be not less than eight per day.
10. Sessions of the Council be programmed as follows:  
  
Thursday: Inauguration and procedural or statutory activities  
  
Friday: Technical Discussions  
  
Saturday and Sunday: Free  
  
Monday to Friday: Working sessions  
  
Saturday: Closure
11. The working documents be duly studied well in advance, to obviate unnecessary interventions.

The Group points out that although various possibilities were considered in regard to the Technical Discussions, it is aware that the Directing Council intends to examine the pertinent rules and take a decision on them.

After full discussion and lengthy examination of the suggestions made, the Group reached the conclusion that making specific recommendations would necessitate a thorough study of the way in which they would affect the constitutional and statutory provisions in force. In addition, the financial implications for PAHO of some of the measures proposed would need to be carefully studied.

The Group felt that in the short time available for studying the possible legal, statutory and financial implications of the measures proposed, it could not afford to make any recommendation at the moment, but that the Executive Committee would be in a position at its meeting in 1976 to look into these matters and propose solutions based on a working document prepared by the Director of the Bureau.

The Working Group therefore respectfully begs to submit the attached resolution to the Council for its consideration.

It would, nevertheless, like to acknowledge the excellent cooperation of the Chairman of the Executive Committee and those of its Members present in the Council, and to state that their contribution was most valuable in connection with the study and approval of the budget and helped to reduce very substantially the time ordinarily spent in such deliberations.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

(Submitted by the Working Group to study the possibility of reducing the length of Meetings of the Directing Council)

THE DIRECTING COUNCIL,

Having considered the report of the Working Group set up to study the possibility of reducing the length of meetings of the Directing Council; and

Bearing in mind the possible implications--constitutional, statutory, and financial--of the measures considered by the Working Group,

RESOLVES:

1. To request the Director to prepare a study of the constitutional, statutory, and financial implications of each of the measures suggested by the Working Group for shortening the number of days of Directing Council sessions and any others that are deemed appropriate, and to include the topic in the program of the 76th Meeting of the Executive Committee.
2. To instruct the Executive Committee to examine this matter and submit its final recommendations to the next meeting of the Directing Council.

*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

Provisional Agenda Item 22

CE76/19 (Eng.)  
14 May 1976  
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

REDUCTION OF LENGTH OF MEETINGS OF THE  
DIRECTING COUNCIL

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## REDUCTION OF LENGTH OF MEETINGS OF THE DIRECTING COUNCIL

### Introduction

During the XXIII Meeting of the Directing Council several Representatives proposed that consideration should be given to the possibility of reducing the duration of the meeting of the Directing Council, mentioning, amongst other things, the difficulties experienced by Ministers of Health in remaining absent from their countries for two weeks. A similar proposal had previously been made with respect to the Governing Bodies of the World Health Organization (WHO).

As a result of the discussion the Directing Council appointed a Working Group to study the matter, whose report was considered and led to the approval of Resolution XVI in which it was resolved:

1. To request the Director to prepare a study of the constitutional, statutory, and financial implications of each of the measures suggested by the Working Group and any others that are deemed appropriate for shortening the number of days of Directing Council sessions, and to include the topic in the program of the 76th Meeting of the Executive Committee.
2. To instruct the Executive Committee to examine this matter and submit its final recommendations to the next Meeting of the Directing Council.

Under the terms of this resolution the Director is submitting for consideration by the Executive Committee the present document which, in addition to complying with the terms of the resolution, analyzes it in the light of a constitutional and institutional interpretation of the Council's role in the context of the purpose of the Organization, its functional structure, its relations with WHO, the interdependent responsibilities of the Governing Bodies and of the Secretariat, and the precedents set by previous meetings.

### Constitutional and Institutional Interpretation of the Council's Role

All matters bearing on the Directing Council's role and responsibilities are to be examined in the context of the structure of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).

By authority of the Conference, the Council is required to legislate, that is to say, to interpret the Constitution in relation to the problems submitted for its consideration and to formulate a policy defining the activities and functions of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau (PASB).

The Council also acts as a forum to which Member Governments can bring the results of their experience, and at which they can present their ideas and proposals for the achievement of the objectives of the Organization in the service of the health and well-being of all the countries of the Americas. As part of its legislative function, the Council also fosters the evaluation of programs seeking to achieve positive results that serve the common interests of the Hemisphere.

As a result of its status as Regional Committee of the World Health Organization for the Americas, the Council is also required to apply the Constitution, Rules of Procedure and policies of that body. It should be pointed out here--as it has a direct bearing on the object of Resolution XVI--that the Directing Council as such and as the Regional Committee of WHO considers at its annual meetings an agenda that affects both WHO and the decisions of the World Health Assembly. This presupposes the existence of a program that, even if it is functionally an integrated whole, consists of an extensive series of projects--currently 758 in number--to be financed from the regular budgets of both organizations as well as with funds from other United Nations agencies and from the Inter-American System. From this it is evident that the role of the Regional Committee for the Americas is much broader than that of other analogous organs of WHO.

The Directing Council operates with the valuable support of the Executive Committee, to which it delegates the examination of all matters of special importance and whose recommendations it considers prior to making decisions on them.

As a group, the four components of the functional structure of PAHO--the Conference, the Directing Council, the Executive Committee and the Secretariat, which is the Pan American Sanitary Bureau--are interdependent. Nevertheless--and this they have demonstrated over their long years of experience--the work of the latter two bodies is fundamentally dependent on that of the former two, whose essential role is to legislate, that is to say, to govern.

#### Constitutional and Procedural Provisions Bearing on Resolution XVI

Article 12.C of the PAHO Constitution states: "The provisional agenda of the Council shall be prepared by the Director of the Bureau and submitted to the Executive Committee for approval. The Council shall adopt its own agenda and, in so doing, may make such additions or modifications to the provisional agenda as it may wish, in accordance with its Rules of Procedure." Article 13 adds: "The Council shall elect its own officers and shall adopt its own Rules of Procedures."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> PAHO Basic Documents, Official Document 125, July 1973, pp. 13-14.

According to the above constitutional principle, each Council is empowered to determine its program of work, the final agenda for its meeting, and therefore the time it will devote to the exercise of its responsibilities. From this it follows that a Council has no authority to determine the duration of the meeting of another Council unless the Constitution is amended accordingly.

For its part, the Executive Committee is required to submit a provisional agenda to the Council and recommend to the latter how it considers that it can best perform its functions.

The Secretariat's role is to assist both Governing Bodies to exercise their responsibilities with maximum effectiveness--a role that includes proposing to them any course of action that it regards as vital to the achievement of the purposes of the Organization.

Resolution XVI defines the steps proposed by the Working Party for reducing the duration of the Council's meetings as suggestions only. Thus interpreted these steps are neither inconsistent with the Constitution nor with the Rules of Procedure, as indicated above.

#### Considerations Affecting Meetings of the Directing Council

A reduction in the duration of the annual meeting of the Directing Council must be compatible with its functions and responsibilities under the Constitution and the Rules of Procedure. In this connection it should be remembered that the number of Governments in PAHO and in WHO in the Americas has increased from 24 to 30 since 1961 and it is likely that other countries will join the Organization in the future. The duration of discussions and the scope and nature of the agenda are clearly related to the number of participating Members.

A study of agendas for meetings of the Directing Council over the past 10 years shows that their average duration was eight working days, including the Technical Discussions. The number of agenda items varied from 28 to 42, averaging 36 at each meeting. A review of these shows that 16% of them related to matters that must be considered by the Council by express provision of the Constitution; 16% arose out of its Rules of Procedure and 26% were directly connected with matters arising out of the policy, strategies and programs of the Organization. Subjects raised by the Conference, by previous Directing Councils and by the Executive Committee amounted to 25%, and those specifically bearing on the WHO program to 8%. The balance of 9% represents subjects raised by the governments, in the Technical Discussions, and other questions.

The length of meetings of the Council depends primarily on the scope and nature of the agenda, together with the prior study given to each of its items, the quality of their documentation and presentation, and the extent to which the countries are interested in participating in their discussion.

The importance of some items, by virtue of their nature and of their significance for the inhabitants of the Americas, generally gives rise--as an examination of previous meetings indicates--to prolonged discussion. Amongst these might be mentioned the program and budget of the Organization, the annual reports of the Director of the Bureau and of the Chairman of the Executive Committee, health sector problems and an analysis of their solutions, the formulation of policies, the Ten-Year Health Plan, the exchange of the experiences of governments in areas of common concern, and the participation of other international and non-governmental agencies and bodies.

The Director is in sympathy with the desires of Ministers and Representatives to devote the minimum time necessary to the discharge of the major constitutional responsibilities of the Directing Council. He believes that they will share his view that what is vital is to judiciously select agenda items consistent with the Organization's requirements and the dynamic and evolving role of health programs in the Americas. The duration of meetings should be the outcome of decisions on agenda items and of their exhaustive analysis rather than the point of departure for such decisions.

It is considered that the assignment of increased responsibilities and broader functions to the Executive Committee, especially with respect to the examination of the program and budget, will be of particular value for the purposes of the matter under discussion. A thorough examination of the budget by the Executive Committee, the records made of its observations, the participation of representatives of the Committee in meetings of the Council, the preparation of an ad hoc report on the program and budget and its various components--as is done in WHO--will significantly facilitate the work of the Council and will contribute to a reduction in the duration of its annual meetings.

#### Steps Proposed by the Working Group

The following are the steps proposed by the Working Group with a view to reducing the duration of meetings of the Directing Council, together with some observations:

1. Delegation of a larger measure of responsibility and of a wider range of functions to the Committee, particularly with respect to the examination of the budget, in such a manner that each of the nine members of the Executive Committee having a knowledge of the budget for a specific country can make a more positive contribution with respect to that budget

The new functions and responsibilities of the Committee, primarily its more active participation in the examination of the budget, together with the advice furnished and the contributions of its members at the Council, will represent very valuable assistance in the analysis of the budget that the Council is required to make, as was observed at the last meeting. As, however, under the Constitution it is the Council that is required to decide on the program and its financing, it is not easy to foresee how much time would be involved in the discussion of this topic of special importance to the work of the Organization.

2. Recommendation that the Executive Committee should examine some of the items normally presented to the Council

As a general rule the Committee examines all items submitted to the Council. This recommendation relates to the functions of the Executive Committee, to which reference has already been made. The studies, analyses and evaluations the Committee makes on policy, programs and other matters represent an important step in carrying out the responsibilities of the Council.

3. Limitation of agenda items

Arising out of this recommendation, the Director will present, for consideration by the Executive Committee, a provisional agenda for each meeting of the Council, which will include those items that, in his judgment, have a vital bearing on the realization of the objectives of the Organization. These items will be placed in such an order as to facilitate discussion. After reviewing this agenda, the Committee would forward it, with any amendments, to the Directing Council, which would be required to make a decision on it at its first meeting.

4. Formation of two main committees to work simultaneously, similar in structure to the Pan American Sanitary Conference

The simultaneous work of the two main committees would require a minimum participation of two representatives from each country, which has in fact been the case in recent meetings, with one or two exceptions, and, according to the meeting place selected, a determination would be made as to its cost.

5. Holding of the Technical Discussions on a Saturday

This proposal should be examined by the Executive Committee which, under the terms of Resolution XXVII (Study of the Technical Discussions) is charged with the continuing review of matters relating to it.

6. Holding of the Technical Discussions at the same time as the meetings of the Council, in which case the countries would undertake to nominate specific experts to participate in them

The same observations as those made with respect to 5 above apply here. In addition, it would seem to defeat the purpose of the Technical Discussions which are included specifically for the Delegates.

7. Working documents and observations on these should be very concise in form and their presentation should only be expanded at the specific request of Delegates

The Director proposes to accept this suggestion for the rationalization of documentation and for the maximum possible limitation of presentations by the Secretariat, subject to discussion of the items.

8. Automatic nomination, in the alphabetical order of countries, of the working parties required for the examination of specific agenda items

It is considered that, in practice, this suggestion would have only limited advantages. It is therefore recommended that the President should continue to nominate members to these groups in the light of the interest and participation of the countries in the item under discussion.

9. Recommendation that the daily schedule of meetings of the Council should not be less than eight hours in duration

No observations are being made on this proposal beyond bringing it to the attention of meetings of the committees of the Council, especially the General Committee, as indicated in Part VI, Articles 27 to 32, of the Rules of Procedure of the Directing Council.

10. The meetings of the Council should be scheduled as follows:

Thursday	- Inauguration and procedural matters
Friday	- Technical Discussions
Saturday and Sunday	- Free
Monday to Friday	- Working meetings
Saturday	- Closure

On the other hand, during the discussions at the last meeting, some participants suggested that the meeting should not exceed one week.

As has been indicated, it is considered that the duration of the meetings of the Directing Council should be determined in relation to its agenda. On this assumption, it is not easy to reach a decision on this and other plans. The primary objection is that Ministers or Representatives would travel at the end of the week to attend the working sessions only and would therefore not be present at the first part of the meeting in which the Council decides on its order of business, officers, the agenda and the Technical Discussions.

11. Recommendation that working documents should be properly studied ahead of time so as to avoid the unnecessary use of the floor at meetings

The Director will forward documentation at the earliest possible stage so that the countries may examine it and be in a position to participate in its discussion.

#### Other Proposals

In paragraph 1 of Resolution XVI, calling for other measures to rationalize the annual meetings of the Directing Council, the following suggestions are made:

1. The decision on certain items that do not involve changes in the program and budget and do not conflict with the provisions of the Rules of Procedure of the Directing Council should be made by the Executive Committee, which should report on it to the Council at its subsequent meeting. Mention is made, *inter alia*, of matters associated with buildings and installations, amendments to the Staff Rules, and the award of prizes.

2. Consideration should be given to the possibility of more effective and systematic organization of discussions. With this in mind it should be recalled that the Directing Council is empowered, under Article 39 of its Rules of Procedure to limit the time allowed to each speaker. Statements may not exceed 10 minutes and presentations of items on the agenda shall be similarly restricted. This measure is mentioned for the sake of completeness but is not recommended, since it would seem to defeat the purpose of full and complete discussion of the issues.

3. At its first meeting the General Committee, in addition to determining the order in which agenda items are to be discussed, should set the time it considers necessary for the discussion of each item. This exercise would permit a better distribution of the time available at each session and allow fuller discussion of those matters that the Council considers to be the most important. As in the case of No. 2 above, this measure is not recommended and for similar reasons.

#### Final Observations

The present document is the outcome of Resolution XVI, approved by the Directing Council at its XXIII Meeting, the purpose of which is to examine the extent to which it is possible to reduce the duration of meetings of this body. The Working Group appointed for this purpose suggested a series of measures, which have been examined by the Secretariat in the light of the experience of the Organization. Others are proposed with a view to the more effective rationalization of the annual process represented by the meeting of the Council, the Governing Body that facilitates the dialogue between the governments and reaches decisions having a major bearing on the health of the inhabitants of the Americas.

The Director has chosen to examine this question, whose importance he recognizes, in the context of the objectives of the Organization, the requirements of its Constitution, its relations with the World Health Organization, and the operational structure with which it is currently provided for the purpose of discharging its responsibilities. This examination shows that the heart of the matter under discussion is the responsibility that the Constitution of PAHO assigns to the Directing Council and that of WHO to the Regional Committee for the Americas, as the Governing Body which is to interpret the Constitution in each specific case and to legislate. Its annual meetings enable it to discharge the responsibilities it has, and which are vital to the progress of the Organization as a whole. The agenda submitted for its consideration should reflect both current and future problems. The duration of its meeting, therefore, should be a consequence of the formulation of the agenda and not its starting point.

In the preparation of the present document, account has also been taken of the experience of recent years arising out of the meetings of this Governing Body, the number and nature of its resolutions, and the fact that the number of Member Governments has increased from 24 to 30 between 1961 and the present.

Resolution XVI of the Council, together with the Working Party's recommendations, are praiseworthy as evidence of the desire of Ministers and Representatives to reconcile the sensitive responsibilities they have as members of their Governments with those they have as Governors of the Pan American Health Organization and the World Health Organization. The examination of the present problem is a constructive step, representing an evaluation of this process and reflecting a desire to accelerate it. Some of the measures proposed are positive and their application, in the form indicated, will enable a reduction to be made in the duration of the meetings of the Council. On the other hand, it might be prudent to consider introducing any changes that might affect the discharge by the Directing Council of its responsibilities on an experimental basis before adopting a final decision on them.



A. Extract from the Precis Minutes of the Twelfth Plenary Session,  
XXIV Meeting of the Directing Council

TEMA 26: ESTUDIO SOBRE REDUCCION DE LA DURACION DE LAS REUNIONES DEL  
CONSEJO DIRECTIVO

ITEM 26: STUDY ON REDUCTION OF LENGTH OF MEETINGS OF THE DIRECTING COUNCIL

El Sr. LARREA (OPS) presenta el tema y se refiere al Documento CD24/6 y al Anexo I del Documento CD23/30.

Recuerda que por delegación de la Conferencia corresponde al Consejo la facultad de legislar, es decir, de interpretar la Constitución. Asimismo, en su condición de Comité Regional de la OMS para las Américas tiene que aplicar la Constitución, los reglamentos y las normas de dicha Organización.

Finalmente menciona el Artículo 12.C de la Constitución de la OPS, e indica que la duración de las reuniones debería ser la consecuencia y no el punto de partida en lo que se refiere a la determinación de los temas y a su análisis exhaustivo.

El Dr. AVILES (Presidente del Comité Ejecutivo) señala que ningún Consejo tiene autoridad constitucional para limitar la duración del Consejo siguiente. No obstante, a su juicio, algunas medidas permitirían ganar tiempo, sin por ello limitar el temario ni su estudio detenido: una mayor concisión de las presentaciones y los debates, la adopción de un horario más funcional y la constitución de grupos de trabajo para resolver los problemas pendientes y evitar largas discusiones en la sala.

Con referencia al Documento CE76/19, examinado por el Comité Ejecutivo en su 76a Reunión, el Presidente del Comité Ejecutivo indica que éste no puede limitar los temas del programa del Consejo. En lo que respecta a la celebración de las Discusiones Técnicas en sábado, se considera poco aconsejable porque se correría el peligro de que disminuyera el número de participantes, y aún sería peor que las Discusiones se celebrasen al mismo tiempo que las reuniones del Consejo porque sería imposible participar en ambas. Por todo ello, en la resolución aprobada por el Comité (CD24/6) se recomienda que no se hagan cambios en el Reglamento Interno del Consejo Directivo. En cambio, parece adecuado que los debates sobre los asuntos de política más importantes se celebren durante la primera semana de la reunión para que los ministros y los participantes de alto nivel puedan regresar a sus importantes ocupaciones.

B. Extract from the Precis Minutes of the Thirteenth Plenary Session,  
XXIV Meeting of the Directing Council

- TEMA 26: ESTUDIO SOBRE LA REDUCCION DE LA DURACION DE LAS REUNIONES DEL  
CONSEJO DIRECTIVO (continuación)  
ITEM 26: STUDY ON REDUCTION OF LENGTH OF MEETINGS OF THE DIRECTING  
COUNCIL (continued)

El Dr. PEREZ GROVAS (México) estima que, por ser el Consejo Directivo un órgano autónomo, no cabe imponerle una política en virtud de la cual se reduzca la duración de sus reuniones. Manifiesta el total acuerdo de su Delegación con la presentación que hizo el Sr. Larrea (OPS) del Documento CD24/6 en la sesión anterior y con el proyecto de resolución incluido en ese documento. Estima también muy pertinente las sugerencias del Dr. Avilés, Presidente del Comité Ejecutivo.

El Dr. PEREDA (Cuba) recuerda que en la XXIII Reunión del Consejo, cuando se trató este tema, estuvo de acuerdo en que no era posible que un Consejo Directivo--que es un órgano soberano--limitase o fuese limitado en su acción por otros órganos de gobierno. Estima, sin embargo, que en los documentos de trabajo y en las actas de las sesiones hay elementos que la Secretaría y los Cuerpos Directivos podrían tener en cuenta no para acortar la duración de las reuniones--puesto que la importancia y la complejidad de los temas del programa obligan a considerarlos durante todo el tiempo que sea necesario--sino para hacerlas más ágiles y fructíferas. Cita al respecto la mayor participación del Comité Ejecutivo en el análisis del presupuesto y la nueva presentación de ese documento introducida por la Secretaría, que han facilitado el examen por parte de las delegaciones. Sugiere que más adelante el Comité Ejecutivo haga conocer con antelación sus recomendaciones al Consejo Directivo no sólo a través de las actas--como se hace actualmente--sino mediante un documento en el que se consignen las razones que justifican su recomendación de que se apruebe el presupuesto. El Consejo Directivo también podría nombrar grupos de trabajo para que analizasen varios temas seleccionados previamente, cuyas conclusiones permitirían al Consejo evitar su examen como temas nuevos.

Respecto al horario de actividades, propone que se vuelva a la costumbre de trabajar los sábados por la mañana y que se ensaye ampliar las sesiones a siete horas diarias.

El Dr. CRUZ (Chile) está de acuerdo con las exposiciones del Sr. Larrea (OPS), del Dr. Avilés (Presidente del Comité Ejecutivo) y de los representantes que le han precedido en el uso de la palabra. La duración de las reuniones del Consejo depende del número de temas del programa, de la extensión de los

debates y de la seriedad con que el Consejo Directivo cumpla sus responsabilidades, sin que nunca pueda ser una condición impuesta. Desea añadir otros ejemplos a los métodos ya propuestos para agilizar el trabajo, tales como: revisar los sistemas usados para la propuesta y elección de candidatos, de manera que no sea necesario que todas las delegaciones expresen su apoyo; recurrir a la ayuda de medios audiovisuales en los debates para dejar en claro cuáles son las mociones presentadas al Consejo; y establecer, para dilucidar ciertos problemas de redacción, comisiones de estudio y pequeños grupos de trabajo de carácter oficioso que permitan prescindir de los servicios de interpretación y del uso de micrófonos.

Dr. EHRLICH (United States of America) agreed with the Representative of Cuba that, although the Secretariat study and the consideration of the item by the Executive Committee provided little in the way of a solution, the meetings could and should be shortened. The way to achieve that was not by limiting the debate, the number of items on the agenda, or the right of representatives to speak on certain issues, but rather by instituting organizational and procedural changes to save time. Many such changes had been suggested by the working group which met in 1975. There was concern that attendance would fall off if the Technical Discussions were held on Saturday. If that was justified, the Technical Discussions might be held on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning. He did not believe that discussing the allegedly more important issues during the first week was very realistic.

He pointed out that, while there was great concern about increasing the effectiveness of the PAHO program, little attention was in fact paid to the efficiency of the Directing Council itself. Those who participated only in the meetings of the Council might not see the image of effectiveness and efficiency which PAHO was trying to create for the Organization as a whole. He hoped that the Secretariat would produce alternative proposals for structuring meetings so that the work could be completed in a shorter period of time.

El Dr. ENDARA (Ecuador), si bien considera deseable reducir la duración de las reuniones del Consejo Directivo, estima, en virtud de las importantes razones consignadas en la exposición del Sr. Larrea (OPS) y en el informe del grupo de trabajo, que esa duración debe ser consecuencia de la formulación del programa que tratará el Consejo. Recuerda además que el número de Gobiernos Miembros ha aumentado de 24 a 30 desde 1961 hasta la fecha y que cada uno de ellos está facultado para expresar su opinión en el curso de las reuniones.

Dr. BAIRD (Guyana) supported the Delegations of Cuba and the United States of America. In the final analysis, the length of the meeting depended upon the Representatives themselves, who should study the documents they received and make statements which were concise and to the point. He also believed that the length of the meetings depended to some extent upon the wisdom of the President.

C. Extract from the Precis Minutes of the Fourteenth Plenary Session,  
XXIV Meeting of the Directing Council

TEMA 26: REDUCCION DE LA DURACION DE LAS REUNIONES DEL CONSEJO DIRECTIVO  
ITEM 26: REDUCTION OF THE LENGTH OF MEETINGS OF THE DIRECTING COUNCIL

El RELATOR da lectura al siguiente proyecto de resolución:

EL CONSEJO DIRECTIVO,

Habiendo examinado el Documento CD24/6 titulado "Estudio sobre reducción de la duración de las reuniones del Consejo Directivo"; y

Reconociendo que corresponde al Consejo Directivo determinar, en cada una de sus reuniones, su propio programa de trabajo, según lo dispuesto en el Artículo 12.C de la Constitución de la Organización Panamericana de la Salud,

RESUELVE:

1. Tomar nota de la Resolución XXI aprobada por la 76a Reunión del Comité Ejecutivo sobre la materia.
2. Sugerir que, de conformidad con lo dispuesto en el Artículo 12-C de la Constitución, en cada una de las reuniones del Consejo se examine la posibilidad de celebrar los debates sobre asuntos de política durante la primera semana y las Discusiones Técnicas en el primer día hábil de la segunda semana, solventándose las demás cuestiones lo antes que se pueda, a continuación.
3. Pedir al Director que prosiga el estudio de esta cuestión y que vuelva a informar al respecto al Comité Ejecutivo en su 78a Reunión y al Consejo Directivo en su XXV Reunión.

THE DIRECTING COUNCIL,

Having studied Document CD24/6 entitled "Study on Reduction of Length of Meetings of the Directing Council"; and

Recognizing that it is the responsibility of the Directing Council at each of its meetings to determine its own program of work in accordance with the provisions of Article 12.C of the Constitution of the Pan American Health Organization,

RESOLVES:

1. To take note of Resolution XXI on this subject approved by the Executive Committee at its 76th Meeting.
2. To suggest that in accordance with Article 12-C of the Constitution, at each meeting of the Council the desirability be considered of holding the debate on policy issues during the first week and the Technical Discussions on the first working day of the second week, any other business to be completed as soon as possible thereafter.
3. To request the Director to continue the study of this question and to report on it once again to the Executive Committee at its 78th Meeting and to the Directing Council at its XXV Meeting.

Dr. EHRLICH (United States of America) said he believed that during the discussion of the subject that morning there had been general agreement, in the light of experience during the present Meeting, that it was not very practical to assign the discussion of policy matters to the first week of the Directing Council.

Furthermore, to set aside a particular day for the Technical Discussions might prejudice what the Director was being requested to do in operative paragraph 3. He therefore proposed that operative paragraph 2 be deleted.

El Dr. AVILES (Presidente del Comité Ejecutivo) manifiesta que la recomendación fue aprobada por unanimidad por el Comité Ejecutivo después de un exhaustivo examen de la cuestión, considerando que era conveniente que durante la primera semana de reuniones del Consejo Directivo se examinaran los asuntos de mayor trascendencia política, como es el proyecto de programa y presupuesto de la Organización, en cuyo debate los Ministros de Salud tienen el mayor interés en participar, si bien debido a sus obligaciones no pueden permanecer ausentes de sus respectivos países por más de cuatro o cinco días.

El PRESIDENTE somete a consideración el proyecto de resolución con la enmienda propuesta por el Representante de los Estados Unidos de América.

Decisión: Se aprueba por unanimidad el proyecto de resolución con la enmienda propuesta.

Decision: The proposed draft resolution as amended was unanimously approved.