



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

EXECUTIVE BOARD
111th Session
Agenda item 9.2

EB111/20
25 January 2003

Collaboration with nongovernmental organizations

Report of the Standing Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations

1. In accordance with paragraphs 4.2 and 4.6 of the Principles governing relations between the World Health Organization and nongovernmental organizations,¹ the Standing Committee² met on 21 January 2003 to consider the documents prepared for Item 9.2 Reports of the Executive Board Committees. It also considered document EB111/22 prepared for Item 9.3, "Policy for relations with nongovernmental organizations". The Board is invited to decide on the recommendations set out in section IV below.

I. APPLICATIONS OF NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR ADMISSION INTO OFFICIAL RELATIONS (Restricted documents EB111/NGO/1-3)

2. The Committee examined applications from the International Association of Human-Animal Interaction Organizations (IAHAIO) (document EB111/NGO/1), the International Society for Environmental Epidemiology (ISEE) (document EB111/NGO/2) and the March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation (document EB111/NGO/3). The applications were transmitted to the members of the Board under cover of a letter numbered L/02.29, dated 15 November 2002.

3. With regard to the application from IAHAIO, according to the information provided it served mainly as a forum of national associations and other multinational bodies to exchange ideas, promote research, and publish a scientific journal relating to the promotion of the mutual welfare of people and animals in their environment. The Committee learned that the nongovernmental organization concerned itself with, *inter alia*, animal welfare including animal population management issues, zoonoses, as well as the use of animals for therapy. In this connection the Committee enquired as to the competence of the nongovernmental organization and to what extent the nongovernmental organization was able to transfer knowledge and technology to countries. It was clarified that the national associations were composed of individuals interested and having competence in specific

¹ *Basic documents*, 43rd ed. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2001.

² Members of the Standing Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations: Dr Z. Alemu (Eritrea), Dr B. Sadrizadeh, Chairperson, (Islamic Republic of Iran), Dr M. Di Gennaro (Italy), Dra L. Lopez (alternate to Dra M.L. Urbaneja-Durant (Venezuela)), Professor Maung Maung Wint (alternate to Professor Kyaw Myint (Myanmar)).

areas. In so far as WHO was concerned the relevant bodies of the nongovernmental organization were found to be competent in matters relating to zoonoses control, in particular helping WHO in the control of rabies through the promotion of humane methods for dog population reduction and responsible dog ownership. While the nongovernmental organization had few financial resources it was successful in mobilizing people at the national level and in this connection WHO had worked with the nongovernmental organization on a number of training seminars on dog population management and responsible dog ownership. In the view of WHO the nongovernmental organization made every effort to contribute to the development of skills at national level.

4. Concerning the application from ISEE. The Committee was informed that the Society was established in 1988 and not in 1998 as stated in the application and that the Society has a long history of collaboration with WHO. The Society brought together individuals in a broad range of countries to foster and strengthen epidemiological studies on the health effects of environmental exposures and, *inter alia*, promote increased use of environmental epidemiology to inform environmental health policy. It was noted that joint activities were many and varied and contributed to WHO's work in the environmental field.

5. On the matter of the application from the March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation, the Committee was informed that in accordance with paragraph 3.5 of the Principles, the Regional Director for the Americas and the Government of the United States of America had been consulted and both parties recommended the application. The Foundation works in the United States of America and internationally to improve knowledge about diseases of humankind and to apply such knowledge to prevent disease on the one hand and on the other to promote the care and treatment by others of persons afflicted by disease. To that end it funds research, develops educational materials for the medical and lay worlds and supports in particular community services relating to the prevention and management of birth defects. Activities with WHO ranged from funding measles and rubella immunization campaigns in the Americas and European regions, research on the effectiveness of food fortification as a means of reducing neural tube defects to WHO's support of the development of international nutrition guidelines for the Foundation.

6. In view of the valuable support extended by the applicants to the implementation of WHO activities, and satisfied that they met the criteria for admission into official relations as set out in the Principles, the Committee agreed to recommend the admission into official relations of the above-mentioned international nongovernmental organizations.

II. REVIEW OF NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN OFFICIAL RELATIONS WITH WHO (Restricted document EB111/NGO/WP/1)

7. The above-mentioned document contained information about collaboration, or the status of relations, between WHO and approximately one-third of the nongovernmental organizations in official relations and, as appropriate, nongovernmental organizations referred to in decision EB109(9).¹ In accordance with paragraph 9 of EB111/NGO/WP/1, and where forthcoming, information was provided concerning nongovernmental organizations whose reports did not arrive in time to be included in the document. Altogether 74 nongovernmental organizations were reviewed in order, *inter alia*, to determine the desirability of maintaining them in official relations with WHO. A list of their names appears in Annex 1.

¹ Document EB109/2002/REC/1, p. 28.

8. The Committee reviewed reports of collaboration from 43 nongovernmental organizations listed in the Annex to the document and supplementary information concerning six nongovernmental organizations listed in paragraph 9 of document EB111/NGO/WP/1. For the most part activities took place during the period 2000-2002, except for nongovernmental organizations referred to in paragraph 3 of decision EB109(9) concerning the period 1999-2001.

9. It was noted that the nongovernmental organizations had worked with WHO primarily in support of WHO's activities relating mainly to the environment and noncommunicable diseases. Examples of activities in the environmental field ranged from the provision of data and technical and financial support in the production of risk assessments of selected chemicals in food, the development of Concise International Chemical Assessment documents, and coordination of research and peer review of results in connection with projects investigating the health effects of electromagnetic fields and ultraviolet irradiation. In the field of noncommunicable diseases, international and regional conferences were convened concerning Islam and, *inter alia*, the science of genetics. Education and training seminars, and agreements to encourage and support research in developing countries, helped to strengthen the capabilities for cardiovascular disease prevention and control at national level in several countries. A work dealing with a core curriculum for palliative nursing was published and financial support provided by certain nongovernmental organizations for the development of a tool to assess cancer-control capability at national level. Other publications were guidelines for various aspects of diabetes prevention and the preparation of the second edition of the World Atlas of Birth Defects. In the field of genetic diseases, work begun on a proposal for classification of cystic fibrosis, as well as a global initiative on haemophilia in developing countries, coordination of thalassaemia-control activities worldwide continued. In the field of blindness prevention, nongovernmental organizations contributed time, money and skills to the development of Vision 2020 and the financial assistance and dedication of volunteer membership of one nongovernmental organization at the national level continued to be crucial to WHO's efforts to eradicate poliomyelitis.

10. The Committee was appreciative of the efforts of the nongovernmental organizations in pursuit of WHO goals and was pleased that further collaboration had been planned or was expected to continue. In the light of this the Committee decided to recommend that the Director-General convey the Board's appreciation of the continuing efforts of the nongovernmental organizations (whose names appear suffixed by an asterisk in the Annex to the report) in support of WHO's objectives, and that on the basis of its review of their reports of collaboration decide to maintain them in official relations with WHO.

11. Reports concerning the following nongovernmental organizations with whom relations altered during the period under review were then considered.

International Life Sciences Institute

12. The Committee noted that during the period under review there had been a number of constructive collaborative activities. However, and notwithstanding the value of the activities, attention was drawn to links between the Institute's membership and funding from the commercial sector, including the tobacco industry. According to the information available, the Institute had been informed of these concerns and some adjustments had been made. It had also expressed commitment to a more transparent approach to disclosure of their funders. In this connection the Committee noted that the Secretariat wished to see the Institute adopt a more transparent approach to disclosing the sources of funds used in its collaboration with WHO, and take additional concrete steps, including reporting on them to WHO, to ensure that the Institute was independent from its funding sources. Having considered the information, the Committee recommended that the Institute be maintained in

official relations with WHO, however, note should be made of the Institute's links with the commercial sector and the Secretariat continue to monitor the situation.

International Federation of Anti-Leprosy Associations

13. According to the information provided WHO was appreciative of activities with members of the Federation. However during the period under review, the Federation discussed with the Global Alliance for the Elimination of Leprosy (an Alliance composed of endemic countries and other partners, including the Federation, for which WHO serves as the Secretariat) concerns which led to a decision that the Federation's membership in the Alliance would be "replaced by the participation as full members of individual [Federation] member associations". In the light of this WHO was of the view that it would collaborate with individual members of the Federation and thus considered that a continuing official relationship would not be relevant at this time.

14. However, the Committee was informed that the matter of relations with the Federation had been discussed within the context of the proposed new policy, which at the time of the evaluation of relations was not available. Within the overall spirit of engagement with nongovernmental organizations set out in the proposed new policy, WHO wished to re-explore the possibility of developing a mutually agreed plan for collaboration with the Federation during the coming year.

15. The Committee having requested further clarification on the matter, which was provided by the Secretariat, decided that in view of the implications of the Alliance's decision, and taking into account that the Principles made provision for the discontinuation of official relations in those cases where, for example, the Board considered that such relations were no longer appropriate, decided to discontinue official relations with the Federation.

16. The Committee then reviewed reports from the following nongovernmental organizations which arrived too late to be included in document EB111/NGO/WP/1 and whose relations also altered in some way.

International Union of Toxicology

17. In spite of efforts to develop meaningful cooperative activities it was not possible to identify sufficient financial resources to enable activities during the period under review. However, during the period under review the Union was successful in assisting in the creation of societies of toxicology in developing countries and in countries in transition. The Committee noted that the Union would very much like to see WHO involved in its 5th congress of toxicology in developing countries, China, November 2003, and that the Union strongly supported WHO's initiative on creating healthy environments for children. In this context the Committee learned that WHO was in the process of strengthening chemical safety capacity building activities at country level and was of the view that the Union's strength in this field and contact at country level with practitioners would be beneficial. It was hoped that this would form the basis of cost-effective training activities. As there appeared to be every reason to expect that planned cooperation would be re-established, the Committee decided to recommend that note be taken with regret that it had not been possible to achieve meaningful cooperation during the period under review, in view of the mutual emphasis given to the strengthening of developing country capabilities in the field of chemical safety the Union be maintained in official relations for one year to enable the development of a work plan.

World Federation of Associations of Poisons Centres and Clinical Toxicology Centres and its successor organization the International Alliance of Clinical Toxicology Societies

18. The Committee noted the Federation had informed WHO that in May 2000 the Federation became defunct upon the creation of a new organization called the International Alliance of Clinical Toxicology Societies. The Alliance and WHO had expressed interest in resuming planned collaboration and to that end hoped that the official relations could be transferred to the Alliance. However, there had been no joint collaboration during the period under review either with the Federation or the Alliance.

19. The Committee was informed that in the view of the Secretariat the Alliance might not yet be considered to meet the criteria for admission into official relations requiring that a nongovernmental organization “have a constitution or similar basic document ... and administrative structure at various levels of action, and authority to speak for its members through its authorized representatives. Its members shall exercise voting rights ...”. The document which the Alliance considered as its constitution contained a preamble, statement of intent and mission statement. It is absent of such features as an agreement on membership and the rights and obligations thereof, a regular assembly of the membership responsible for the policies of the organization, overseeing financial transactions, etc. In the view of this the Committee was of the view that the Alliance’s profile was not yet one which would be considered to meet the criteria for official relations.

20. Notwithstanding the value of such an organization, the Committee decided to recommend that the Board not admit the Alliance into official relations and, for the record, discontinue official relations with the defunct World Federation of Associations of Poisons Centres and Clinical Toxicology Centres.

Nongovernmental organizations whose reports remain outstanding

21. In the absence of reports, the Committee was unable to review relations with the following 12 nongovernmental organizations: Association of the Institutes and Schools of Tropical Medicine in Europe, International Academy of Pathology, International Eye Foundation, International Federation of Oto-Rhino Laryngological Societies, International League of Associations for Rheumatology, International Radiation Protection Association, International Society for Human and Animal Mycology, International Solid Waste Association, International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease, International Union of Immunological Societies, International Union of Local Authorities, World Federation of Parasitologists. Pending the receipt of their reports, it was decided to recommend to the Board that the review of their relations be deferred until its 113th session.

Follow-up to decision EB109(9)¹

22. The Committee considered reports concerning the International Medical Informatics Association and the World Veterans Federation which, in accordance with paragraphs 4 and 5 of decision EB109(9), had been maintained in official relations to enable, *inter alia*, the development of a plan for collaboration.

¹ Document EB109/2002/REC/1, p. 28.

International Medical Informatics Association

23. It was noted that the Association did not report collaboration during the period under review and that according to the information provided circumstances had been such that some time had elapsed before the two parties pursued discussions thus it had not been possible to pursue the matter of a work plan. However, both parties continued to be of the view that collaboration would be of value. An initial agreement on collaboration in connection with the Association's international congress in South Africa, October 2003, was agreed. Various proposals for activities in connection with the Association's triennial world Congress, MEDINFO which is one of the world's leading scientific and professional fora in the field of medical informatics, and technical publications will be explored. The Committee decided to recommend that note be made of the circumstances which had caused a delay in follow-up to its decision and that, in view of the expectations of agreement on a work plan, the Association be maintained in official relations for a further period of one year.

World Veterans Federation

24. The Committee noted that the Federation reported contact with "different units" in WHO, however, it had not been possible to conclude a joint plan for collaboration as a basis to revitalize the relations. According to the history of recent relations with the Federation, and in spite of goodwill on both sides, there had been no joint collaboration for several years. It was decided to recommend that appreciation be expressed for the Federation's interest in the work of WHO but, in view of the continuing difficulties in agreeing a work plan, discontinue official relations with the Federation.

25. In accordance with paragraph 3 of decision EB109(9) the review of relations with certain nongovernmental organizations was deferred pending receipt of their report of collaboration. Some were dealt with in connection with the general review of relations as set out in paragraphs 7-10 above. The following concerns the situation of the remaining nongovernmental organizations.

International Council on Social Welfare

26. According to the information provided during the period under review (1999-2001) there had not been collaboration which would warrant official relations, however, there were extenuating circumstances. It appeared that the Council had been without capacity to undertake collaboration as a result of several changes of leadership. However, the situation appeared to have resolved itself upon the appointment in mid-August 2002 of a new executive director. The Council saw "scope for cooperation between the Council and WHO" in the area of health promotion. For its part, WHO was of the view that it would be possible to revitalize the relations on the basis of a work plan setting. The Committee decided to recommend that note be taken of the extenuating circumstances which had precluded constructive collaboration and, in view of a continuing wish to agree on a plan for collaboration, maintain the Council in official relations for a further one year. A report on the plan to be presented at the Board's 113th session.

International Ergonomics Association

27. According to the information provided, while there had been no joint activities during the period under review, the Association had expressed an interest in rekindling active collaboration, and WHO likewise. To that end both parties had appointed different focal points and it was intended to seek collaboration in connection with WHO's work on the prevention of musculoskeletal disorders. The Committee decided to recommend that note be taken of the regrettable lapse in collaboration but

maintain the Association in official relations for a further period of one year to enable agreement on a work plan.

Nongovernmental organizations whose reports remain outstanding

28. The Committee noted that reports from the International Federation on Ageing, World Assembly of Youth, World Association for Psychosocial Rehabilitation and the World Organization of the Scout Movement remained outstanding. In their absence it decided to defer the review for a further year until the Board's 113th session.

Other matters

International Society of Surgery

29. Under this item the Committee gave attention to a request set out in a letter dated 8 April 2002 from the International Society of Surgery "... to be released from the official relations with WHO ...". In accordance with the request, the Committee decided to recommend that official relations with the Society be discontinued.

III. CONSIDERATION OF POLICY FOR RELATIONS WITH NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS – REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL (Documents EB111/22 and EB111/22 Corr.1 (Arabic, English, and Russian))

30. The Committee was of the view that the proposed new policy for relations with nongovernmental organizations could serve as a good base for modernizing the system for WHO's relations with nongovernmental organizations and opening up WHO both regarding nongovernmental organization accreditation and participation at governing bodies and regarding coherence in collaborative arrangements between nongovernmental organizations and WHO. On the one hand it would serve to reduce needless reporting and on the other hand offered greater guarantees that conflict of interest issues will be dealt with more effectively.

31. While mindful that paragraph 16 of the report provided for the Executive Board to "consider the role of the Standing Committee on nongovernmental organizations and change its terms of reference accordingly.", the Committee wondered how it might advance the Board's consideration of this matter. In this connection, it was suggested that wording along the following lines could be inserted as a new paragraph 8 in the Annex to document EB111/22:

"The Executive Board shall be advised by its Standing Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations, composed of five members, which shall meet during the Board's January session. The Standing Committee shall make recommendations to the Board on matters relevant to paragraphs 6 and 7 of the Policy."

32. Having considered the matter it was decided to recommend that the Board note the report of the Director-General contained in document EB111/22 and that it adopt the resolution set out in paragraph 17 of that document with the corrigendum contained in document EB111/22 Corr.1 and with the above-mentioned wording including the consequential changes to the paragraph numbers in the Annex.

IV. PROPOSED DRAFT RESOLUTION AND DECISIONS

Draft resolution

The Executive Board,

Having examined the report of its Standing Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations:¹

1. DECIDES to admit into official relations with WHO the International Association of Human-Animal Interaction Organizations, International Society for Environmental Epidemiology, and the March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation;
2. DECIDES to discontinue official relations with the International Federation of Anti-Leprosy Associations and the World Veterans Federation;
3. DECIDES, at the request of the International Society of Surgery, to discontinue official relations.
4. DECIDES, to discontinue official relations with the World Federation of Associations of Poisons Centres and Clinical Toxicology Centres and not to admit into official relations its successor organization the International Alliance of Clinical Toxicology Societies.

Draft decision on review of nongovernmental organizations in official relations with WHO

The Executive Board,

Having considered and noted the report¹ of its Standing Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations concerning the review of one-third of the nongovernmental organizations in official relations, and follow-up to decision EB109(9), decided as follows concerning the relations with the nongovernmental organizations listed in the Annex to the report.

The Board requested the Director-General to convey its appreciation of the continuing efforts of the nongovernmental organizations (whose names appear suffixed by an asterisk in the Annex to the report) in support of WHO's objectives and that on the basis of its review of their reports of collaboration decided to maintain them in official relations with WHO.

The Board noted with regret that it had not been possible to achieve meaningful cooperation during the period under review but that in view of the mutual emphasis given to the strengthening of developing country capabilities in the field of chemical safety, maintain the International Union of Toxicology in official relations for one year to enable the development of a work plan.

In the absence of reports making it possible to undertake a review, the Board decided to defer review of relations with the following nongovernmental organizations until its 113th session: Association of the Institutes and Schools of Tropical Medicine in Europe, International Academy of Pathology, International Eye Foundation, International Federation of Oto-Rhino Laryngological Societies, International Federation on Ageing, International League of Associations for

¹ Document EB111/20.

Rheumatology, International Radiation Protection Association, International Society for Human and Animal Mycology, International Solid Waste Association, International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease, International Union of Local Authorities, International Union of Immunological Sciences, World Assembly of Youth, World Association for Psychosocial Rehabilitation, World Federation of Parasitologists and the World Organization of the Scout Movement.

Noted information about the International Life Sciences Institute and its links with the commercial sector and that the Secretariat is monitoring the situation. However, in view of the continuing collaboration with the Institute, maintain it in official relations with WHO.

With regard to reports of follow-up to decision EB109(9) concerning the review of relations with the International Council on Social Welfare, International Ergonomic Association, and International Medical Informatics Association, noted that in so far as the Council and the International Medical Informatics Association were concerned circumstances had led to constrained contacts, and regretted that collaboration had lapsed with them and with the International Ergonomic Association. In view, however, of expressions of intent to work together on a planned basis maintain them in official relations for a further year to facilitate agreement on work plans.

Notes that relations with the International Society of Surgery, World Federation of Associations of Poisons Centres and Clinical Toxicology Centres and the World Veterans Federation were the subject of a resolution.

Policy for relations with nongovernmental organizations

Following its consideration of the report by the Director-General on the Policy for relations with nongovernmental organizations (document EB111/22), including the draft Policy annexed to that document, the Standing Committee recommends that the Executive Board adopt the resolution contained in paragraph 17 of the report with the corrigendum contained in document EB111/22 Corr.1, and with the following amendment:

Add a new paragraph 8 to the Annex to document EB111/22 as follows:

“The Executive Board shall be advised by its Standing Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations, composed of five members, which shall meet during the Board’s January session. The Standing Committee shall make recommendations to the Board on matters relevant to paragraphs 6 and 7 of the Policy.”

and make consequential changes to the paragraph numbers in the Annex.

ANNEX 1

**LIST OF NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN OFFICIAL RELATIONS
REVIEWED BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD AT ITS 111TH SESSION**

Association of the Institutes and Schools of Tropical Medicine in Europe
Christoffel-Blindenmission¹
CropLife International*
Cystic Fibrosis Worldwide, Inc.*²
European Centre for Ecotoxicology and Toxicology of Chemicals*
FDI World Dental Federation*
German Pharma Health Fund e.V.*
Helen Keller International (Worldwide) Inc.¹
Inter-American Association of Sanitary and Environmental Engineering¹
International Academy of Pathology
International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness¹
International Air Transport Association*
International Association for Dental Research*
International Association of Hydatid Disease¹
International Association of Logopedics and Phoniatics*
International Clearinghouse for Birth Defects Monitoring Systems*
International Commission on Non-ionizing Radiation Protection*
International Commission on Radiological Protection*
International Consultation on Urological Diseases*
International Council on Social Welfare
International Diabetes Federation¹
International Ergonomics Association
International Eye Foundation Inc.
International Federation of Anti-Leprosy Associations
International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions*
International Federation of Ophthalmological Societies*
International Federation of Oto-Rhino Laryngological Societies
International Federation on Ageing
International League of Associations for Rheumatology
International Leprosy Association¹
International Life Sciences Institute*
International Medical Informatics Association
International Organization against Trachoma*
International Pediatric Association*
International Radiation Protection Association
International Society for Biomedical Research on Alcoholism*
International Society of Doctors for the Environment*

* Based on reports of joint collaboration for the period under review, the Standing Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations recommended the maintenance of official relations of those nongovernmental organizations whose names are suffixed by an asterisk; other nongovernmental organizations are the subject of specific decisions or a resolution.

¹ Bodies with whom WHO regional offices report collaboration.

² Previously known as International Cystic Fibrosis (Mucoviscidosis) Association (name changed on 1 January 2003).

International Society for Human and Animal Mycology
International Society for Preventive Oncology*
International Society of Nurses in Cancer Care¹
International Society of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine*
International Society of Surgery
International Solid Waste Association
International Union against Cancer¹
International Union against Sexually Transmitted Infections¹
International Union against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease
International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (The World Conservation Union)*
International Union for Health Promotion and Education*
International Union of Immunological Societies
International Union of Local Authorities
International Union of Toxicology
International Water Association¹
Islamic Organization for Medical Sciences¹
Organisation pour la Prévention de la Cécité*
Project ORBIS International, Inc. (ORBIS International)¹
Rehabilitation International*
Rotary International¹
Thalassaemia International Federation*
The International Association of Lions Clubs¹
The Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind (Sight Savers International)*
World Assembly of Youth
World Association for Psychosocial Rehabilitation
World Blind Union*
World Federation of Associations of Poisons Centres and Clinical Toxicology Centres
World Federation of Hemophilia¹
World Federation of Hydrotherapy and Climatotherapy*
World Federation of Neurology*
World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies*
World Federation of Parasitologists
WORLD HEART Federation¹
World Hypertension League¹
World Organization of the Scout Movement
World Veterans Federation
World Veterinary Association¹

= = =