

## INTERNATIONAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

## COMMITTEE V (REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS)

## SUMMARY RECORD OF HARMONIZING SUB-COMMITTEE,

First Meeting Held at Hunter College, Tuesday 2 July 1946 at 12:00 noon

Chairman: Dr. W.A. TIMMERMAN (Netherlands)

## Members:

Dr. Timmerman (Netherlands) Chairman of Committee V  
Dr. Thomen (Dominican Republic) Vice-Chairman Committee V  
Major Mani (India) Rapporteur Committee V  
Dr. Paula Souza (Brazil)  
Dr. Sze (China)  
Dr. Parisot (France)  
Dr. Hakim (Lebanon)  
Dr. Rovirosa (Mexico)  
Dr. Evang (Norway)  
Dr. Paz Soldan (Peru)  
Dr. Moll (El Salvador)  
Dr. MacKenzie (United Kingdom)  
Dr. Parran (United States)  
Dr. Gromashevsky (U.S.S.R.)  
Dr. Guzman (Venezuela)  
Dr. Stampar (Yugoslavia)

Election of Officers

It was decided that the officers of Committee V should take over additionally their same offices in the sub-committee. The Chairman then asked if there were desired any preliminary discussion about regional arrangements before the Committee should proceed to set up some general principles.

General Discussion

DR. GROMASCHEVSKY (U.S.S.R.) suggested that the sub-committee should begin its work on the points on which there had been a clear divergency of opinion. It was not a question of the fate of the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau, since everyone wanted it to be maintained, but whether or not it should be integrated with the World Health Organization. If such integration were found

desirable, the task would be only a drafting one; if it were decided, however, that the Bureau should be autonomous, the problem would be much larger and many agreements would have to be drawn up, not only with the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau but with the Pan-Arab League to which the same privileges would have to be extended.

Dr. STAMPAR (Yugoslavia) believed that the issue was clear. The sub-committee was faced with two problems:

1. Was the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau, to become a regional office or not? and
2. If not, what agreements should be made with it?

He repeated his point of view that if it were left as an autonomous organization, this policy would greatly weaken the position of the World Health Organization. Also, since the Organization could not come into existence immediately, what sort of interim arrangements should be made? In his opinion the Interim Commission should be instructed to discuss the subject with the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau and to conclude an agreement with it to the effect that it should be part of the World Health Organization, conserving, at the same time, its internal organization and perhaps even its name. He appealed to American countries to help to find a generally acceptable solution to the problem.

Dr. PARRAN (United States) first asked whether the feeling of the sub-committee was the same as that of the Secretariat, that he, as President of the Conference, should have full freedom to express the views of his Delegation at meetings over which he was not presiding. After being reassured on this point, he reminded the Committee that the United States proposal which had been under discussion in Committee V (E/H/RA/W.4) had been put forth tentatively, as a basis for discussion. The position of his Government was not inflexible; he was quite ready to accept the compromise amendments submitted by the United Kingdom, China, Brazil, France, Venezuela, as well as others, perhaps, which he had not had time to read. Although they had been worded

differently, they had all been directed toward a single objective - "merging" or "integration", and he saw every opportunity for the sub-committee to reach agreement.

Dr. MANI (India) then asked whether it was agreed that the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau was to be an integral part of the Organization.

Dr. PARRAN (United States) replied that he could not support a unilateral decision, which would mean that the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau would immediately and from then on exist only as a regional creature of the World Health Organization. His objective was that it should ultimately and progressively become integrated.

Dr. MANI (India) supported by Dr. EVANG (Norway) believed that the Committee should simply decide on the main question: whether the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau was to become an integral part of the Organization, without indicating the time of such integration. When and how this objective would be achieved would be discussed later.

Dr. PAZ SOLDAN (Peru) emphasized that the American countries demanded no privileges, but simply a recognition of the existence of the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau. He felt that the Conference did not have the authority to dissolve something which it had not created and that its authority should be limited to accepting the full co-operation which the Bureau was prepared to give. He pointed out that the Conference was not yet really world-wide in membership and that the Organization would certainly need the membership of the American countries, which had a great amount of experience to offer it. They were only asking for a period of five years in which to complete this integration.

Dr. SZE (China) expressed his appreciation of the fact that the United States Delegation was willing to modify its proposition. He thought that the sub-committee was probably in agreement as to three principles:

1. that the goal to be reached was integration;
2. that this integration should be progressive;
3. that it should be by mutual agreement.

Dr. STAMPAR (Yugoslavia) held that before these principles should be drafted, two questions should be answered (1) Was the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau to become or not to become a part of the World Health Organization? (2) If so, when was it to be completely integrated? He hoped that the sub-committee would confine its discussion to these two subjects.

Dr. HAKIM (Lebanon) asked for the definition of "integration". Would the integration proposed be that of the activities of the regional organization or that of the organization itself? If the former were meant, and a certain independence given to the regional organization, such integration would, in his opinion, be possible, but if it were a question of the integration of the entire organization, as seemed to be contemplated in the proposal submitted by the United Kingdom (E/H/R/A/W/10), he would have to make a reservation for his Government. The promotion of improved health was only one of the activities of the Pan-Arab League, which could not possibly be completely integrated with the World Health Organization.

The CHAIRMAN mentioned the Singapore Bureau, which had been integrated with the Health Organization of the League of Nations, as an example of the application of integration to such agencies and Dr. BIRAUD, Secretary-General of the Conference, explained that this Bureau had been created by the League of Nations in 1920, at the request of the countries concerned. It was entirely integrated with the League of Nations; yet it could make many decisions for itself. The Director and Assistant Directors were proposed by the countries belonging to the Bureau, and the Director himself named his personnel. The directors of public health services in those countries directed, controlled, and partially financed the Singapore Bureau, which had, therefore, a certain authority of its own. The World Health Organization could certainly make similar arrangements with the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau.

Dr. EVANG (Norway) thought that after such general and clarifying statements, the sub-committee should try to reach some conclusions. The application of "integration" to regional offices, which had also been

discussed in Committee V, implied a real decentralization. There could not be an integration of functions of an organization without an integration of the organization itself. The regional offices would have a high degree of responsibility:

1. in fulfilling the requirements of the World Health Organization, and
2. in initiating health programmes for their own areas.

It would be only too difficult, he feared, to find enough local initiative.

The sub-committee should, then, agree on this principle of integration. It would naturally be a slow process. Ideally if governments would recommend merging as quickly as possible, it might take place at the time of the formation of the Organization in a year or a year and a half. Some governments, however, might prefer to wait until the Organization was established, before merging with it.

When it could be done, however, could be discussed later. The essential thing was to decide upon the principle.

Dr. MOLL (El Salvador) thanked Dr. Biraud for his explanation of the partial autonomy of the Singapore Bureau, and agreed with the statement of Dr. PARRAN.

DECISION: The Committee then unanimously agreed on the following two principles:

1. "that the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau should in due course be integrated with the World Health Organization."
2. "that all other existing health organizations should in due course be integrated with the World Health Organization."

It was further decided to leave for the next meeting decisions as to arrangements to be made by the Interim Commission as well as those about the progressive nature of the integration.

The meeting rose at 1:30 p.m.

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