



# **SPECIAL SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

*Virtual Session, 29 May 2020*

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**FINAL REPORT**

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## FINAL REPORT

### Opening of the Session

1. A Special Session of the Executive Committee was held., on 29 May 2020. The session was held using a virtual platform owing to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The session was attended by representatives of the following eight Members of the Executive Committee elected by the Directing Council: Barbados, Canada, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Haiti, Mexico, Peru, and the United States of America. Representatives of the following Member States and Observer States participated in an observer capacity: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Portugal, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Spain, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).
2. The Honorable Jeffrey Bostic (Barbados, President of the Executive Committee) opened the session and welcomed the participants, noting that the session had been convened by the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau (PASB) in order to consider some issues of serious concern for PAHO. He highlighted the significance and importance of the agenda and expressed concern over the non-payment of assessed contributions and some voluntary contributions by Member States, as this has placed the Organization on the brink of insolvency. He pointed that all Member States had benefited from PAHO's technical cooperation, noting that for almost 120 years, the Organization had worked alongside Member States to build national and regional public health capacity, strengthen health systems, and enable better decision-making through data and evidence. He also pointed out that, most recently, the Organization had worked in lockstep with Member States to confront the COVID-19 pandemic, while also working to protect the public health gains made over the years. He reiterated the need for Member States to work together to find a way to ensure that PAHO could survive and continue to serve the Region.
3. Dr. Carissa Etienne (Director, PASB), adding her welcome to all participants, paid tribute to frontline health workers everywhere for their courage and fortitude in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and invited the Committee to observe a minute of silence to mourn those lost to COVID-19 and to remember those who were ill and suffering.
4. The Committee observed a minute of silence.
5. The Director explained that she had decided to call a special session of the Executive Committee less than a month before the regular June session for three reasons. First, she had felt that she could not wait any longer to inform Member States of the dire financial situation that PAHO was facing. Second, by informing the Committee of the situation now, she hoped that it would be possible to have a productive discussion on other important matters during the June session. Moreover, if the Committee approved the creation of a working group of

Member States, as proposed in Document CESS1/2, it would be important for the working group to begin its work as soon as possible in order to have useful recommendations ready for consideration by the Directing Council in September. Lastly, PASB had received numerous urgent requests from Member States for the purchase of COVID-19 emergency medical supplies through the Regional Revolving Fund for Strategic Public Health Supplies (“Strategic Fund”). She had therefore considered it important to put the proposal for increasing the Fund’s capitalization (Document CESS1/3) before the Committee now, rather than waiting until June.

6. The Director emphasized that PAHO stood at a crossroads. The situation of non-payment of assessed contributions, already serious in 2019, had now become far worse. The amounts currently outstanding were so large that they jeopardized PAHO’s ability to continue operating. Indeed, the National Audit Office of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland (NAO), the Organization’s External Auditor, had expressed concerns about PAHO’s continued financial viability. She had therefore asked the NAO to delay issuing its opinion on the Organization’s financial statements for 2019 until there was greater clarity on the financial situation. PAHO had never received a qualified audit opinion in its history, and such an opinion could have serious ramifications for donor and partner relationships.

7. The Director recalled that, in 2019, Member States had approved a program budget that provided for zero nominal growth in assessed contributions for the 2020-2021 biennium, which in real terms had meant a reduction of around 3%. At the same time, Member States had established ambitious technical objectives and asked the Bureau to deliver on them. In order to contain costs, the Bureau had reduced staff, which had meant that remaining staff had been obliged to take on added responsibilities in order to continue meeting technical cooperation needs. She pointed out that the Bureau had thus had to do more with less in both budgetary and staff terms. Nevertheless, despite the cost containment measures she had implemented—including the staff reductions, a hiring freeze, and curtailing all but the most essential expenditures—the Bureau faced a dire cash-flow situation and was severely handicapped in terms of how much it could support even Member States with the highest needs.

8. She was therefore asking the Executive Committee to authorize her to use necessary financial and managerial tools to keep the Organization afloat and to work with her to chart the way forward. At the same time, in order to avert the painful cuts and organizational restructuring alluded to in Document CESS1/2, she exhorted Member States to pay their assessed contributions, including any arrears, in full.

## Procedural Matters

### *Officers*

9. The following Members elected to office at the Committee's 165th Session in October 2019 (Decision CE165[D1]) continued to serve in their respective capacities during the Special Session:

<i>President:</i>	Barbados	(Hon. Jeffrey D. Bostic)
<i>Vice President:</i>	United States of America	(Ms. Rachel Owen)
<i>Rapporteur:</i>	Mexico	(Ms. Martha Caballero)

10. The Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, Dr. Carissa Etienne, served as Secretary ex officio, and the Deputy Director, Ms. Mary Lou Valdez, served as Technical Secretary.

### *Adoption of the Agenda (Document CESS1/1)*

11. Pursuant to Rule 9 of its Rules of Procedure, the Committee adopted, without change, the provisional agenda prepared by the Director (Decision CESS1[D1]).

## Program Policy Matters

### *Current Financial Situation and Adjustments to the Pan American Health Organization Strategic Priorities (Document CESS1/2)*

12. Mr. Dean Chambliss (Director, Department of Planning and Budget, PASB), introducing Document CESS1/2, noted that, although the document had a strong financial focus, all of the Organization's resources, both financial and human, were used solely to accomplish PAHO's mission of leading strategic, collaborative efforts among Member States and other partners to promote equity in health, to combat disease, and to improve the quality of, and lengthen, the lives of the peoples of the Americas. He explained that the reasons for the financial crisis currently affecting the Organization were the historic levels of non-payment of assessed contributions by some Member States since 2019 and the hold placed by the Government of the United States on funding to the World Health Organization (WHO), which was also being applied to PAHO. The document showed the amounts owed as of 30 April 2020, including arrears from previous years. He noted that a total of \$164.6 million<sup>1</sup> in assessed contributions remained outstanding, including an unprecedented \$63.8 million for 2019. Since 30 April, some additional payments had been received; however, they had not substantively changed the nature of the financial situation.

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, all monetary figures in this document are expressed in United States dollars.

13. He explained that assessed contributions constituted around 55% of total flexible funding, which was critical to most PAHO programs and financed over 40% of country office expenses. For 15 Member States, over 95% of PAHO technical cooperation activities were reliant on flexible funding. Hence, any reduction in flexible funding had a direct impact on the Organization's technical cooperation capacity.

14. The document referred to a "worst-case scenario," in which no further assessed contribution payments were received from the United States and there was a 17% reduction in payments from other countries and a 15% reduction in WHO flexible funds for 2021. In such a scenario, the projected cash deficit would be \$36.0 million for 2020 and \$121.8 million for the 2020-2021 biennium. Until further assessed contribution payments were received, the Bureau believed it had no choice but to operate under the worst-case scenario.

15. The document described the staff reductions and other cost containment measures already being implemented. Due to the cash-flow problems, flexible funding for activities and short-term staff had been drastically reduced. By way of illustration, \$100 million had been distributed in 2018 for spending by technical programs and within member countries. In 2020, that figure was just \$22 million, of which obligatory general operating expenses accounted for \$13.5 million, leaving only \$8.5 million across the entire region for technical cooperation activities, short-term staffing, and activities related to enabling functions. Consequently, unless additional assessed contributions were received, short-term staff would have to be let go, including some staff who were supporting the Organization's COVID-19 response.

16. Mr. Chambliss concluded his presentation by noting that, at present, country offices were just barely covering their operating expenses, a situation that severely crippled PAHO's ability to respond to needs at country level. If the worst-case scenario materialized in 2021, fixed-term staff costs would have to be reduced by some \$50 million, or around 25%, which in turn would necessitate a major restructuring of the Organization and a revision of its strategic priorities. If, on the other hand, assessed contributions were paid, such drastic measures could be avoided or reversed.

17. The Committee was asked to consider authorizing two borrowing options to finance operational expenses on a temporary basis: internal borrowing of up to \$15 million from the existing balance of the Master Capital Investment Fund (MCIF) and external borrowing from the commercial market in an amount not to exceed \$50 million, to be repaid over a maximum period of five years. The Committee was also asked to approve the temporary staff furlough scheme described in the document. In addition, the Committee was invited to establish a working group of Member States to work with the Bureau in revising PAHO's strategic priorities for 2020-2021. The terms of reference for the working group were set out in an annex to Document CESS1/2.

18. The Executive Committee expressed concern about the Organization's grim financial situation and affirmed the crucial importance of PAHO's work, particularly in the current

context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Numerous delegates expressed gratitude for the support their countries had received from the Organization in responding to the pandemic and emphasized the need to maintain the solidarity and Pan Americanism that had characterized PAHO throughout its history. Delegates urged Member States to meet their financial obligations to the Organization, with some noting that their Governments had already paid their assessed contributions in full and others indicating that their health authorities were working to ensure that their Governments fulfilled their financial commitment to the Organization. The Delegate of Canada announced that his Government planned to contribute an additional CAN\$ 7.5 million to support PAHO's work in combatting the COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, several delegates pointed out that the economic crisis resulting from the pandemic would make it difficult for many countries to meet their financial obligations to the Organization and would likely further delay the payment of assessed contributions.

19. The Delegate of the United States, indicating that she wished to clarify the status of her Government's contributions, said that the United States usually paid PAHO on a quarterly basis, with a delay of two quarters due to its financial situation. To date, the United States had paid 50% of its assessed contribution for 2019 and none of its 2020 contribution. The outstanding amount shown in Table 2 of Document CESS1/2 included amounts that the United States would not ordinarily pay at the present time, including amounts for calendar year 2020.

20. The Committee thanked the Director for her proactive leadership in confronting the Organization's financial difficulties and for the steps taken to contain costs. It was suggested, however, that the current context called for a more in-depth exercise aimed at improving the accountability and transparency of the Organization and enhancing its efficiency. As for the measures proposed in Document CESS1/2, delegates expressed support for internal borrowing from the Master Capital Investment Fund, but not for external borrowing from commercial sources, with one delegate noting that domestic law in her country prohibited the payment of interest related to external borrowing. Another delegate suggested that the entire membership of PAHO should be consulted about potential borrowing options and proposed that the discussion of such options should therefore be deferred until the 58th Directing Council in September.

21. Delegates unanimously supported the formation of a Member State working group (MSWG) to review the Organization's strategic priorities and endorsed the terms of reference set out in Annex A to Document CESS1/2. One delegate suggested, however, that the terms of reference should include the analysis of a document to be prepared by the Bureau that would lay out a broad package of austerity measures, including a review of the salaries of the Executive Management of PASB, which would make it possible to reduce the financial burden on the Organization and its Member States, while enabling it to continue fulfilling its mandates.

22. Delegates voiced qualified support for the idea of furloughing staff, stressing that furloughs should be a measure of last resort. Clarification was sought as to how furloughed

staff would be compensated for reduced hours and how benefits and entitlements would be impacted if furloughs exceeded the hourly equivalent of 30 days. The need for clear communication with staff in order to avoid any expectation of back pay was underlined. A delegate inquired whether it might be possible to limit furloughs only to staff deemed to be non-essential.

23. It was emphasized that any staff cuts or furloughs should be undertaken with an eye to protecting the Organization's priority countries and the smaller country offices. To that end, a delegate suggested that the operating expenses of PAHO Headquarters and of the country offices with the largest number of staff should be reviewed with the aim of striking a balance such that smaller country offices would not be disproportionately affected by any staff reductions. It was also suggested that any decisions regarding staff cuts or furloughs should be guided by Member States' recommendations regarding the revision of strategic priorities and should therefore be postponed until the MSWG had completed the reprioritization exercise.

24. Mr. Chambliss, thanking delegates for their recognition of PAHO's work, said that, unless assessed contributions were received very soon, measures would have to be taken that would render the Organization virtually unrecognizable. The support that the Bureau was able to provide to Member States, including the in-country support, would be drastically reduced. Actions would have to begin immediately, especially if the option of external borrowing was not approved.

25. Mr. Gerald Anderson (Director of Administration, PASB) assured the Committee that furloughing of staff would be a last resort, after all other cost-saving measures had been exhausted. As the document indicated, the Director had the authority under the PAHO Staff Regulations and Staff Rules to place staff on special leave without pay. The proposal was that all fixed-term staff would have their take-home pay reduced by the equivalent of a certain number of hours per month. Staff would, however, remain employed and their benefits would not be affected. Staff would not be paid for the reduced hours at later date, but would receive compensatory leave for those hours. As to whether furloughs could focus on particular categories of staff, such as non-essential or non-emergency staff, the Bureau's judgment, based on the jurisprudence of United Nations tribunals, was that it could not single out any particular group within a category of staff. Furloughs would have to apply equally to all staff in all categories. Furloughs were intended to be a temporary measure and would not be a substitute for the restructuring that might occur in the worst-case scenario outlined in the document.

26. The Director recalled that PAHO had been established 117 years earlier by republics that were concerned not just about health per se but about its implications for trade and the economy. PAHO had always operated on the principle of solidarity, and with good reason: when the Organization was able to contain or stop an epidemic in one of its weakest countries, all countries, including the larger and wealthier ones, were protected.



27. She had listened carefully to delegates' comments regarding the critical role that PAHO had played in health development in their countries. She had also heard their calls for greater efficiency. She had not heard many Member States calling for the prompt payment of assessed contributions, which was disappointing. She pointed out that payment of assessed contributions was an obligation and a debt that Member States would continue to owe and eventually have to find a way to pay. She appealed to them to do so now, rather than waiting for months or years, when the situation would be even worse.

28. Under her administration, Member States had been fully engaged in the Organization's strategic planning and prioritization and had been kept abreast of the Bureau's efforts to introduce efficiencies. She affirmed that the Bureau would continue working with Member States in reprioritizing and in seeking greater efficiencies. But Member States must understand that the Bureau was already operating with very basic levels of human resources, and any further loss of staff would reduce its ability to deliver technical cooperation. Without immediate payment of assessed contributions, the Bureau would have no choice but to adopt some of the draconian measures put forward in the document. Those measures would inevitably impact the technical programs that it could deliver and might well alter the structure of the Organization, including the closure of country offices. Ultimately, they could lead to the decimation of an organization that has served the Region well for over a century.

29. Referring to the suggestion that any decisions regarding staff reductions or furloughs should be postponed until after the MSWG had completed its revision of the Organization's strategic priorities, she pointed out that the MSWG would not be presenting its recommendations until September and emphasized that the Bureau must take action well before then. Otherwise, the Organization would become insolvent before September.

30. The proposed resolution contained in Annex B to Document CESS1/2 was amended to reflect various points raised in the discussion. In particular, a reference to the protection of PAHO priority countries was added; the option of external borrowing from commercial sources was removed; and a paragraph was added requesting the Director, in consultation and coordination with the MSWG, to prepare a broad package of austerity measures, including a review of the organizational structure of PASB and of the salaries of its Executive Management, to be submitted for consideration by the 58th Directing Council. In addition, the Director was requested to submit a report to the Committee at its 166th Session in June on the status of the Organization's finances and the measures implemented to effect cost savings, together with a detailed outline of the consequences if the Organization did not receive further assessed contributions nor did it have access to external borrowing.

31. The Committee adopted the resolution as amended (Resolution CESS1.R2).

**Financial and Administrative Matters*****Emergency Loan from the Revolving Fund for Access to Vaccines to the Regional Revolving Fund for Strategic Public Health Supplies (Document CESS1/3)***

32. Dr. James Fitzgerald (Director, Department of Health Systems and Services, PASB) introduced Document CESS1/3, which put forward a proposal to transfer up to \$50 million from the Revolving Fund for Access to Vaccines (the Revolving Fund) to the Regional Revolving Fund for Strategic Public Health Supplies (the Strategic Fund) in order to meet the urgent needs of PAHO Member States and enable the procurement of vital COVID-19 emergency supplies through the Strategic Fund. He reviewed the history of the two funds, noting that they constituted a critical element of PAHO technical cooperation for the achievement of public health goals in the Americas. Through pooling of demand and economies of scale, they enabled Member States to secure access to quality vaccines, essential medicines and health supplies at affordable prices. At the same time, they supported the achievement of national health program goals and increased capacity to respond to outbreaks and emergency situations.

33. Dr. Fitzgerald noted that the Region was facing unprecedented challenges in securing access to COVID-19 supplies, and countries were experiencing critical shortages. Smaller countries, which had lower purchasing power, had been particularly affected. Through the Strategic Fund, the Bureau had worked closely with Member States to enable them to access needed supplies and to strengthen the coordination of demand planning and supply. However, in order for the Strategic Fund to respond to the enormous demand, it was necessary to increase its level of capitalization.

34. As the document indicated, the amount in the Strategic Fund Capital Account currently totaled \$20 million, whereas the amount in the Revolving Fund Capital Account totaled \$219 million. The proposal for an emergency loan of up to \$50 million from the Revolving Fund to the Strategic Fund would increase the latter Fund's response capacity and enable it to secure goods that required immediate and/or partial advanced payment; increase supplier engagement; ensure quality supply at affordable prices; and increase pooling of demand and supply, in particular for smaller Member States. The funds transferred from the Revolving Fund would be reimbursed by the Strategic Fund on a rotating basis during the 2020–2021 biennium, and the status of the emergency loan would be reported to the Executive Committee during the biennium. Appropriate managerial controls would be in place to ensure that there was no negative impact on the Bureau's ability to support Member States participating in the Revolving Fund over the coming 18 months.

35. The Executive Committee applauded the Bureau's efforts to support countries in grappling with the pandemic, including through the Strategic Fund, and expressed support for the proposal. Nevertheless, delegates sought assurances that the transfer of funds would not have any negative impact on countries' ability to access vaccines not related to the pandemic. The need to continue to implement routine immunization programs and maintain high vaccination coverage rates was underscored. The Bureau was asked to indicate whether

eventual high demand for a COVID-19 vaccine had been taken into account in forecasting countries' vaccine needs over the coming 18 months.

36. A delegate inquired whether it would be feasible to apply a compensation mechanism where by the 3% procurement charge for supplies purchased through the Strategic Fund could be transferred to the Revolving Fund. The same delegate asked what mechanisms the Organization planned to implement to ensure that the procurement of supplies from the Strategic Fund was done under the best possible conditions and so that there was a balance between the cost and benefit of the supplies purchased. Another delegate emphasized the need to ensure both favorable prices and good quality of the products purchased. A third delegate requested clarification as to the frequency of reporting to the Executive Committee on the status of the emergency loan.

37. Dr. Fitzgerald assured the Committee that the Bureau was committed to implementing the necessary controls, as outlined in the document, and would work arduously to ensure the availability of sufficient funding levels to enable Member States to continue accessing the line of credit for the purchase of vaccines through the Revolving Fund. However, the Bureau urged all Member States to make advance payments to both funds, as doing so would free up capital and enable more countries to avail themselves of the lines of credit to make purchases through the two funds. The Bureau was closely monitoring the various COVID-19 vaccine development efforts and would ensure that funding was available through the Revolving Fund mechanism to rapidly scale up access to the vaccine once it became available.

38. With regard to the issues of efficiency, cost, and pricing, the Bureau worked with countries to implement best practices for international procurement. Various strategies were employed, depending on whether products were available from a single source or multiple sources. The strategies were differentiated in that way to ensure an effective balance between affordability and quality assurance. As for the 3% procurement service charge, the Bureau had always ensured that the revenues collected through such charges were used exclusively to support the activities of the revolving fund mechanisms, and it would continue to do so. As to reporting, the Bureau would submit reports on the status of the emergency loan to the Executive Committee at its 167th Session in October 2020 and its 168th Session in June 2021.

39. The Director affirmed that the Bureau would take all possible measures to ensure that the Revolving Fund was able to respond to Member States' vaccine needs, while also assisting them in gaining access to COVID-19 supplies through the Strategic Fund. Member States would be asked to pay a minimum of 50% upfront in order to place orders through the Strategic Fund. She would personally monitor the impact of any fund transfers to ensure that the Revolving Fund always had the resources needed to enable Member States to access both routine vaccines and the COVID-19 vaccine, when it became available.

40. The Committee adopted Resolution CESS1.R1, approving the proposal for an emergency loan from the Revolving Fund to the Strategic Fund.

### **Closure of the Session**

41. The Director said that she hoped that Member States were fully seized of the significance of the process that had been embarked upon during the session. She pointed out that few delegates had spoken seriously with regard to saving the Organization. Indeed, those participating in the meeting had presided over what might well be the beginning of the dismantling of solidarity in health, with implications for the health and well-being of many. She encouraged delegates to apprise their presidents of the situation.

42. She emphasized that the current generation of leaders must seek to preserve for the next generation the spirit of solidarity and the gains that had been made in health in the Americas. The countries of the Region must be united in their determination to succeed or together they would fail.

43. The President thanked the Director for her passion and her leadership of the Organization and assured her that the Organization was too important to Member States for them to allow it to fall. He urged Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full.

44. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the President declared the Special Session of the Executive Committee closed.

### **Resolutions and Decisions**

45. The following are the decisions and resolutions approved by the Executive Committee in the course of the Special Session:

#### ***Resolutions***

***CESS1.R1 Emergency Loan from the Revolving Fund for Access to Vaccines to the Regional Revolving Fund for Strategic Public Health Supplies***

#### ***THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,***

Having considered the Report of the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau (PASB) on the proposed emergency loan from the Revolving Fund for Access to Vaccines to the Regional Revolving Fund for Strategic Public Health Supplies (Document CESS1/3);

Noting that, as of 30 April 2020, the Capital Account of the Revolving Fund for Access to Vaccines (the Revolving Fund) has an available balance of US\$ 23 million out of a total balance of approximately \$219 million, sufficient to ensure availability of short-term credit to accommodate the vaccine requirements of Member States that participate in the Revolving Fund;

Noting with concern that, as of 30 April 2020, the Capital Account of the Regional Revolving Fund for Strategic Public Health Supplies (the Strategic Fund) has an available balance of only \$2 million, a level of capitalization and available cash balance insufficient to meet the needs of Member States that participate in the Strategic Fund;

Acknowledging the projected need for health supplies related to the COVID-19 pandemic among Member States that participate in the Strategic Fund,

***RESOLVES:***

1. To authorize the Director to do the following:
  - a) provide to the Capital Account of the Strategic Fund an internal emergency loan consisting of a short-term, limited, rolling transfer of funds, up to a maximum of \$50 million, from the Capital Account of the Revolving Fund;
  - b) determine the amounts and timing of transfers to the Capital Account of the Strategic Fund, up to the maximum total loan amount of \$50 million, based on the availability of funds in the Capital Account of the Revolving Fund and on the programmatic needs of the participating Member States for vaccines, syringes, and cold chain equipment and for COVID-19 emergency supplies;
  - c) establish a 2020-2021 biennium repayment schedule for full reimbursement by the Strategic Fund to the Revolving Fund on a rotating basis for the loans extended to it;
  - d) apply appropriate managerial and financial controls to ensure that there is no negative impact on the ability of PASB to support Member States participating in the Revolving Fund over the coming 18 months;
  - e) report to the 167th and 168th sessions of the Executive Committee on the status of this emergency loan, including its effectiveness and its repayment status.
2. To urge all Member States to ensure that funds are secured and available to transfer to PASB to make advance payments to suppliers on their behalf in order to acquire the requested quantities of COVID-19 emergency supplies without delay in the current fragile market, with a view to ensuring the effective functioning and maximum benefits of the emergency loan.

*(First meeting, 29 May 2020)*

**CESS1.R2      *Current Financial Situation and Adjustments to the Pan American Health Organization Strategic Priorities***

***THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,***

Having reviewed the *Current Financial Situation and Adjustments to the Pan American Health Organization Strategic Priorities* (Document CESS1/2);

Noting that the current financial situation of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) is untenable due to the non-payment of US\$ 164.6 million in assessed contributions owed by several PAHO Member States as of 30 April 2020;

Acknowledging that, in the absence of payments for the large amounts of assessed contributions owed, the Organization will be required in the very near future to undertake sweeping measures, including measures affecting the Organization's strategic priorities, as well as its financing, staffing, and structure;

Understanding that, while the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau (PASB) has the authority to make financial and personnel decisions concerning the Organization and to enact major organizational changes due to the current scenario of severely reduced funding (i.e., the "worst-case" scenario), the Director is seeking Member State approval and guidance, as appropriate, prior to implementing actions that may include internal borrowing, the separation from service of a large part of the PAHO workforce, reductions in the take-home pay of PAHO staff members, discontinuation of technical programs, and other critical measures;

Bearing in mind the extensive cost-saving measures already taken by PASB to reduce organizational expenditures,

***RESOLVES:***

1. To commend the Director for calling the Special Session of the Executive Committee in order to address the dire financial circumstances faced by the Organization.
2. To take note of the *Current Financial Situation and Adjustments to the Pan American Health Organization Strategic Priorities* (Document CESS1/2).
3. To acknowledge that the strategic priorities and budget allocations approved in the Program Budget of the Pan American Health Organization 2020-2021 (*Official Document 358*) and its accompanying resolutions will be impossible to fulfill in the "worst-case" funding scenario envisaged.
4. To establish a Member State Working Group to review PAHO's strategic priorities for 2020-2021, with the Terms of Reference contained in the Annex.

5. To grant the Director the authority to borrow funds in order to finance expenses of the Program Budget 2020-2021, pending receipt of Assessed Contributions, in light of PAHO Financial Regulations 8.5 and 9.5, as follows:
  - a) the exceptional authority, until 31 December 2021, to borrow up to a maximum amount of \$15 million from the Master Capital Investment Fund (MCIF).
  
6. To approve the Director's proposal to exercise her authority under PAHO Staff Rule 650.2 as follows:
  - a) implement a temporary administrative furlough by placing all PASB staff members, including those in the professional and higher, general service, and national officer categories, on Special Leave without Pay for a specified number of hours per month with a commensurate reduction in take-home pay proportionate to the number of furlough hours taken, but without impacting staff member accrued annual leave, benefits, or entitlements, while protecting PAHO priority countries;
  - b) implement a temporary furlough only after all other reasonable cost-saving measures have been taken by the Organization, and after all applicable funding sources have been exhausted.
  
7. To request that the Director, in consultation and coordination with the Member State Working Group, prepare a broad package of austerity measures, including a review of the organizational structure of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau and of the salaries of Executive Management, to be submitted for consideration by the next Directing Council of the Organization.
  
8. To request that the Director of PASB provide a report on the status of the Organization's financial situation and the measures implemented to effect cost savings, as well as a detailed outline with the consequences if the Organization does not receive the assessed contributions nor has access to external borrowing, to the 166th Session of the Executive Committee in June 2020 and the 58th Directing Council in October 2020.
  
9. To urge all Member States to ensure immediate and full payment of all outstanding assessed contributions.

Annex

**Annex**

**Member State Working Group to Review PAHO's Strategic Priorities for 2020-2021**

**Terms of Reference**

a) **Objectives:**

- i. To provide input and advice to the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau (PASB) regarding strategic priorities for the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in the “worst-case” funding scenario described in the *Current Financial Situation and Adjustments to the Pan American Health Organization Strategic Priorities* (Document CESS1/2). Revisions to priorities as a consequence of the COVID-19 crisis may also be considered.
- ii. To prepare a set of written recommendations to the 58th Directing Council regarding revised strategic priorities for the Organization.

b) **Composition:** The Member State Working Group (MSWG) will be composed of all current members of the Executive Committee and any other Member State that sends a written request to form part of the Working Group. Requests should include the names of the individual(s) nominated to the Working Group and must be addressed to the current President of the Executive Committee (the Minister of Health of Barbados), submitted to the PAHO Governing Bodies Office, and received by 12 June 2020.

c) **Timeline:** The MSWG will begin its work on 16 June 2020 and conclude at the 58th Directing Council in September 2020.

d) **Working modalities:** The MSWG will conduct its work entirely through virtual means, including but not limited to virtual meetings and email communications. A “written silence procedure” will be used (i.e., non-response within a specified period will indicate approval) in order to expedite deliverables. A dedicated SharePoint site will be established to manage all written documents associated with the work of the MSWG.

e) **Deliverables:**

- i. Provide timely inputs to the Director and/or her representatives regarding proposed revisions to PAHO's strategic priorities as previously established in the Program Budget of the Pan American Health Organization 2020-2021, and the Strategic Plan of the Pan American Health Organization 2020-2025.
- ii. Provide a written report to the 58th Directing Council detailing the deliberations of the MSWG and providing recommendations to the Directing Council regarding revised strategic priorities for the 2020-2021 biennium.

*(Second meeting, 29 May 2020)*



***Decisions***

***CESS1(D1) Adoption of the Agenda***

Pursuant to Rule 9 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Committee, the Committee adopted the agenda submitted by the Director (Document CESS1/1).

*(First meeting, 29 May 2020)*

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the President of the Executive Committee, Delegate of Barbados, and the Secretary ex officio, Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, sign the present Final Report in the English language.

DONE in Washington, D.C., United States of America, on this 29 day of May in the year two thousand twenty. The Secretary shall deposit the original texts in the archives of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau. The Final Report will be published on the website of the Pan American Health Organization once approved by the President.

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Jeffrey D. Bostic  
President of the Special Session  
of the Executive Committee  
Delegate of Barbados

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Carissa Etienne  
Secretary ex officio of the Special Session  
of the Executive Committee  
Director of the  
Pan American Sanitary Bureau

**Annex A**

**AGENDA**

- 1. OPENING OF THE SESSION**
  - 2. PROCEDURAL MATTERS**
    - 2.1 Adoption of the Agenda and Program of Meetings
  - 3. PROGRAM POLICY MATTERS**
    - 3.1 Current Financial Situation and Adjustments to the Pan American Health Organization Strategic Priorities
  - 4. ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL MATTERS**
    - 4.1 Emergency Loan from the Revolving Fund for Access to Vaccines to the Regional Revolving Fund for Strategic Public Health Supplies
  - 5. OTHER MATTERS**
  - 6. CLOSURE OF THE SESSION**
-

**Annex B**

**LIST OF DOCUMENTS**

**Working Documents**

CESS1/1	Adoption of the Agenda
CESS1/2	Current Financial Situation and Adjustments to the Pan American Health Organization Strategic Priorities
CESS1/3	Emergency Loan from the Revolving Fund for Access to Vaccines to the Regional Revolving Fund for Strategic Public Health Supplies

**Annex C**

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS/LISTA DE PARTICIPANTES  
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<b>Vice-President / Vicepresidente:</b>	Ms. Rachel Owen (United States of America)
<b>Rapporteur / Relator:</b>	Lic. Martha Leticia Caballero Abraham (Mexico)

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**SPAIN/ESPAÑA (cont.)**

Sra. Dña. Concepción Figueroa  
Observadora Permanente Adjunta de  
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Estados Americanos  
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**SPAIN/ESPAÑA**

Sra. Dña. Carmen Montón  
Embajadora, Observadora Permanente de  
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Estados Americanos  
Washington, D.C.

**SPECIAL GUESTS / INVITADOS ESPECIALES**

**PAHO Audit Committee/  
Comité de Auditoría de la OPS**

Mr. Martin Guozden

**PAN AMERICAN SANITARY BUREAU/  
OFICINA SANITARIA PANAMERICANA**

**Director and Secretary ex officio of the  
Executive Committee/Directora y  
Secretaria ex officio del Comité Ejecutivo**

Dr. Carissa F. Etienne

**Advisors to the Director/  
Asesores de la Directora**

Ms. Mary Lou Valdez  
Deputy Director  
Directora Adjunta

**Advisors to the Director/  
Asesores de la Directora (cont.)**

Dr. Jarbas Barbosa Da Silva Jr.  
Assistant Director  
Subdirector

Mr. Gerald Anderson  
Director of Administration  
Director de Administración

**PAN AMERICAN SANITARY BUREAU/  
OFICINA SANITARIA PANAMERICANA (cont.)**

**Advisors to the Director/  
Asesores de la Directora (cont.)**

Dr. Heidi Jimenez  
Legal Counsel, Office of the  
Legal Counsel  
Asesora Legal, Oficina del Asesor  
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Ms. Mônica Zaccarelli Davoli  
Senior Advisor, Governing Bodies Office  
Asesora Principal, Oficina de los Cuerpos  
Directivos

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