

is strong enough to be able to perform with maximum independence. The same degree of independence is also desirable for other institutions across the multilateral system.

Governance needs to align with the expectations laid on the organization, especially when it comes under the extreme stress of dealing with a pandemic. Reform attempts directed towards the role of the Executive Board have met with little success. The failure of the Board to perform as an executive body, closely supporting and guiding the work of the organization, has been evident during the current pandemic.

The Panel recommends

- I. **Establish WHO's financial independence**, based on fully unearmarked resources, increase Member States fees to 2/3 of the budget for the WHO base programme and have an organized replenishment process for the remainder of the budget.
- II. **Strengthen the authority and independence of the Director-General**, including by having a single term of office of seven years with no option for re-election. The same rule should be adopted for Regional Directors.
- III. **Strengthen the governance capacity of the Executive Board**, including by establishing a **Standing Committee for Emergencies**.
- IV. **Focus WHO's mandate on normative, policy, and technical guidance**, including supporting countries and regions to build capacity for pandemic preparedness and response and for resilient and equitable health systems.
- V. **Empower WHO to take a leading, convening, and coordinating role** in operational aspects of an emergency response to a pandemic, **without**, in most circumstances, taking on responsibility for procurement and supplies, while also ensuring other key functions of WHO do not suffer including providing technical advice and support in operational settings.
- VI. **Resource and equip WHO Country Offices** sufficiently to respond to technical requests from national governments to support pandemic preparedness and response, including support to build resilient equitable and accessible health systems, UHC and healthier populations.
- VII. **Prioritize the quality and performance of staff at each WHO level**, and de-politicize recruitment (especially at senior levels) by adhering to criteria of merit and relevant competencies.