



Independent observer  
of the Global Fund

## Board Decisions Regarding Governance

### 1. NGO representative chosen as Global Fund Vice Chair

In a surprise to all present, the Global Fund board chose Dr. Helene Rossert, the board member representing Developed Country NGOs, as Vice Chair at its meeting on March 18-19. This is the first time that a nongovernmental delegate or a woman has been chosen as the Fund's Chair or Vice Chair.

Dr. Rossert is a medical and public health doctor with more than 15 years' experience working on HIV/AIDS. As Director General of AIDES, the largest French AIDS organization, she directs 1,500 staff and volunteers in France, Africa, and elsewhere.

"I am truly honored to be elected to this important position," said Dr. Rossert. "Since the inception of the Global Fund, civil society has sought an equal seat at the table with governments. My election is a step in the right direction."

Rita Arauz Molina, the board member representing Developing Country NGOs, said, "Helene truly represents the shared values of civil society. We fully endorsed her candidacy and strongly believe that her election sends a clear message to Global Fund partners around the world."

Dr. Rossert replaces Dr. Suwit Wilbulpolprasert of Thailand, who had resigned as Vice Chair because he had ceased to be a board member. Dr. Rossert will serve for one year, joining Tommy Thompson, US Secretary of Health and Human Services (Global Fund Chair) and Richard Feachem (Global Fund Executive Director) as the Fund's key decision-makers between board meetings.

There were two candidates for the Vice Chair position: Dr. Rossert, and Mrs. Sushma Swaraj, India's Minister of Health. Global Fund rules state that last year and this, the Chair must come from the "donor

group” (developed country governments, private sector, and foundations) and the Vice Chair must come from the “recipient group” (developing country governments, developing country NGOs, and developed country NGOs). Next year, a new Chair and Vice Chair must be chosen, and that time the Chair must be from the recipient group and the Vice Chair must be from the donor group.

Immediately before the vote, when it came time for the two candidates to make brief speeches to the board explaining why they were standing, Mrs. Swaraj stood up and withdrew her candidacy, saying she felt it important that the board unite behind one candidate. Dr. Rossert was then unanimously elected.

Prior to the vote, the prevailing opinion was that more votes were likely to be cast for Mrs. Swaraj than for Dr. Rossert. However, many of the likely votes for Mrs. Swaraj (who was attending her first Global Fund board meeting) were based not on her experience, but on the perception by some government board members that it was India’s “turn” to be Vice Chair. Supporters of Dr. Rossert pointed out that this is an attitude that prevails in United Nations bodies; but the Global Fund is a new type of organization where things should be handled differently.

## 2. Need for vote for communities living with the diseases

Over time, increasing numbers of board members have felt unhappy that the board member representing communities living with HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria (the “communities” board member) does not have a vote. At present, there are 18 board members with a vote and five with no vote. The voting members consist of nine in the “donor” group (seven donor governments, private sector, and private foundations) and nine in the “recipient” group (seven recipient governments, developing country NGOs, and developed country NGOs). The non-voting members are “communities,” UNAIDS, WHO, World Bank, and a seat representing Switzerland, where the Fund is based.

The board voted at this meeting to have its Governance and Partnership Committee examine ways in which the “communities” delegation can become a voting member, and to report back to the next board meeting in June.

One idea that was widely discussed in the hallways is for one vote to be given to the communities delegation, increasing the “recipient” group to ten, and, for reasons of balance, for one vote to be given to a new donor, increasing the “donor” group to ten. A more innovative idea that some raised was for there to be three voting groups: “donors” (seven governments), “recipients” (seven governments) and “civil society” (seven seats, consisting of developing countries NGO, developed countries NGO, private sector, foundations, communities, and two others), with four from each group being needed for a vote to pass.

## 3. Board committees

Much of the work of the board is conducted by four board committees that review certain issues between the three-times-per-year board meetings and then make recommendations that the full board votes on. Some committees have been more effective than others, and some have felt over-burdened. The board resolved that a study should be conducted regarding the structure, role and composition of the board committees, with recommendations to be presented to the next board meeting.

4.

- New members of TRP

After an evaluation of applications from 576 people, the board chose nine new members of the Technical Review Panel, as follows: Andrei Beljaev (Russia); David Burrows (Australia); Kaarle O. Elo (Finland); Antonio Pio (Argentina); Jayasankar Shivakumar (India); Godfrey Sikipa (Zimbabwe); Stephanie Simmonds (UK); Michael J. Toole (Australia); Stefano Vella (Italy). These will first serve on the TRP when

it meets in May to review Round 4 applications.

The new members will join the following 17 people who served on the TRP in one or more of the previous rounds: Jonathan Broomberg (South Africa); John Chimumbwa (Zambia); Mary Bourke Ettlign (USA); Paula I. Fujiwara (USA); Peter Godfrey-Faussett (UK); Wilfred Griekspoor (Netherlands); Hakima Himmich (Morocco); David Hoos (USA); Lee-Nah Hsu (USA); Michel D. Kazatchkine (France); Fabio Luelmo (Argentina); Giancarlo Majori (Italy); Munar (first name not known) (Colombia); Pierre-Yves Norval (France); David H. Peters (Canada); Richard L. Skolnik (USA); Standing (first name not known) (UK);

#### 5. Ethics policy

The board approved an extensive policy on ethics and conflict of interest. The policy applies to board members and alternates, board committee members, TRP members, and Secretariat employees.

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