

MINUTES OF THE CHS ALLIANCE GENERAL ASSEMBLY 20-21 November 2019

ATTENDING:

See list of attendees in Annex 1.

1. CHAIR'S WELCOME AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1.1. WELCOMING REMARKS

The Chair of the CHS Alliance, Robert Tickner, welcomed the members of the Alliance, observers and invitees and declared that the meeting had been convened according to the Statutes and quorum was met.

He gave an introductory speech highlighting the successes of the CHS Alliance in the past five years since the CHS was launched, as well as the challenges faced by the members and the sector to make aid work better for people. He looked forward to the coming days of reflection, collaborative work and exchange of ideas to support the Secretariat in its work.

The Chair stressed the importance of donors' commitment to implementing the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS), thanking those who are supporting the CHS Alliance, namely, Australia, Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg, Sweden and Switzerland, and calling for greater recognition of the CHS and financial support to the CHS Alliance by donors.

1.2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The meeting agenda and the procedure for voting on changes to the Statutes were approved by consensus.

2. ELECTIONS RESULTS

2.1. BOARD ELECTION

Shama Mall, Deputy Regional Director, Programs & Organizational Development, Community World Service Asia, was the designated Returning Officer for this year's Board elections and voting. She announced the results at the meeting.

The following candidates were elected:

- **Full members**
 - **Jacqueline Koster**, Deputy Director, Disaster Response & Preparedness, World Renew
 - **Robert Sweatman**, British Red Cross, Head of Performance and Accountability
 - **Coleen Heemskerk**, International Director of Strategic Planning, Act Church of Sweden

- **Rehema Kajungu**, Deputy Country Director, TPO Uganda
- **Independent seats**
 - **Mohamed Zahid Almasri**, Director of International Coordination and Missions, Physicians Across Continents
 - **Yegana Guliyeva**, Cofounder & Former Institutional Development Adviser, Agra Information Centre (AIM-Azerbaijan)
 - **Robert Tickner**, Former Acting Under Secretary General, Partnerships, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and Former CEO, Australian Red Cross

91 full members in good financial standing were entitled to vote for this election. 59 members cast their vote. The quorum of 40% was met (64.8%).

The members acknowledged that Board members **Samah Bassas, Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, Osama Ezzo and Martha Namera Woyessa** were not running for re-election and they are leaving the Board. They were thanked for their great contribution to the Board in the past three years.

2.2. CHAIR ELECTION

All current and newly elected Board members were given time to express their interest to run for the position of Chair. Only one candidate was nominated, **Robert Tickner (exiting Chair), who was confirmed as the incoming Chair for a second term.**

3. **CODE OF CONDUCT AND COMPLAINTS PROCESS**

Jacqueline Koster (JK), Chair of the Complaints Committee of the CHS Alliance, presented the Conference's Code of Conduct, defining participants' behaviour at the venue and also during social times. The Assembly adopted the Code of Conduct.

She also presented the mission and composition of the CHS Alliance's Complaints Committee. As the committee is about to revise the complaints policy, JK invited members to share their views on this with her.

A point was noted to apply the same Code of Conduct to future events, including CHS Exchanges in the future. This was agreed.

4. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

The Chair of the Board introduced Tanya Wood, Executive Director (ED) of the CHS Alliance. He underlined the good relationship between the Board and the ED and commended her for her work to date.

The ED thanked the Board members, Board Chair and Board Committee chairs' for their support. The ED also thanked the members who have been open with her on both the opportunities and challenges they wished to see addressed by the organisation.

In her report, she highlighted the importance of the CHS at a time when the humanitarian and development sectors are increasingly focused on the critical recognition to take a people-centred approach to our work. She acknowledged that this will not be achieved without a shift in power, including a strong stance on protecting people from sexual exploitation and abuse. CHS Alliance members are at the forefront of these important efforts and can help drive wide-spread adoption of the CHS and a more accountable aid system that works better for people affected.

The ED's report was followed by an engaging question and answer session with the members.

5. STATUTES' REVISION

Robert Tickner, Chair of the Board, chaired this session. Robert Sweatman, Chair of the Membership and Nominations Committee joined by video link.

The Chair presented the motions for the updates to the current Statutes. These had been shared with members ahead of the meeting for amendments and suggestions. None had been received.

He outlined the voting process; only members present in the room and those who had nominated a proxy could vote. The voting was conducted via an electronic platform. The quorum was met.

The motions are detailed in Annex 2. Results of the voting were:

- Motion 1: passed (40 in favour, 1 abstention)
- Motion 2: passed (40 in favour, 1 abstention)
- Motion 3: passed (40 in favour, 1 abstention)
- Motion 4: passed (36 in favour, 3 against, 1 abstention)
- Motion 5: passed (41 in favour)

All motions passed; **the Assembly adopted all the changes proposed** to confirm the new CHS Alliance Statutes.

6. TREASURER REPORT

John Beverley, CHS Alliance Treasurer, gave his report to the General Assembly. He highlighted the vote of confidence from the donors with a number of new multi-year grants agreed in 2019, as well as an increase in the amount of membership fees collected.

The Treasurer paid tribute to the high quality of the financial management and control exercised by the staff of the CHS Alliance and thanked the members of the Finance Risk & Audit Committee for their regular scrutiny.

He reminded the Assembly that "Berney Associates" is the auditing company elected in 2016 to assess the Alliance's accounts. Based on the recommendation of the FRAC, it was proposed to the Assembly that Berney Associates be reappointed as the CHS Alliance auditors until the next General Assembly. The motion was submitted to the General Assembly for voting by show of hands. **The Assembly adopted the resolution unanimously.**

A point of order raised: the resolution was not submitted ahead of time. Point of order was well noted.

7. WELCOME DAY TWO AND SESSION WITH JEREMY KONYNDYK

Shama Mall, Vice Chair of the CHS Alliance, welcomed everyone to the second day and opened the session with Jeremy Konyndyk, co-author of the paper *People-Driven Response: Power and Participation in Humanitarian Response*.

Jeremy explained, via video link from the US, that the aim of the paper was to identify the changes needed to achieve genuine accountability to affected people. This will only be achieved, he argued, when accountability is treated as an integral element of the culture and systems of humanitarian action.

He was interviewed by Makena Mwobobia, Board member and Executive Director of Action Aid Kenya, and then took a number of questions from the floor.

8. UPDATES 2020 / 2021 STRATEGY

The current strategy of the CHS Alliance was adopted in 2017 to cover 2018-2021. Given that the Alliance is a relatively new organisation on a steep learning curve, combined with the rapid changes in the sector, there is a need to update the current strategy at its midway point.

The members engaged in a number of groups to analyse, debate and suggest improvements to each of the proposed strategic objectives to inform the updated strategy.

During this session, Pierre Hauselmann, Executive Director of HQAI gave a presentation on third party certification work.

The results of this work have been collated to feed into the updated strategy process, which will be approved by the CHS Alliance Board in early 2020.

9. CLOSING REMARKS

The Chair of the Board thanked the ED and CHS Alliance staff for organising the event. The Chair stressed the positive work and contribution of everyone in the room during the CHS Exchange and the General Assembly, saying how much he had felt inspired by everyone's contributions. He noted the achievements of this General Assembly with the election of seven members of the Board, the adoption of changes to the Statutes, and the valuable feedback on the update of the strategy.

10. AOB

None.

End of the meeting

Robert E. Tickner, Chair of the Board

Matthew Carter, member of the Board

Hélène Maillet, minutes' taker