# Frequently Asked Questions

# Pakistan’s Candidature for World Health Organization, Director General

## When is the position of WHO DG falling vacant?

## July 1, 2017

## What is the process of electing the new DG?

The process is election based and will be held in a two-step manner. In the first step, the 34-member Executive Board of the World Health Organization will select up to five candidates for an interview and will then subsequently select up to three. This short list will be forwarded to the World Health Assembly and the final DG will be elected through a process of general election.

## Who are the members of the Executive Board?

There are 34 members of the WHO Executive Board. The list of the Executive Board members in the public domain includes members who would retire at the end of 2016. The updated Executive Board country list for 2017, by WHO regions, appears below:

1. Nepal, Bhutan (South East Asia)
2. Congo, DR Congo, Eritrea, Gambia, Liberia, Burundi, Algeria (Africa)
3. New Zealand, China, Philippines, Thailand, Fiji, Vietnam (Western Pacific)
4. United Kingdom, Sweden, Malta, France, Kazakhstan, Russia, Turkey, Netherlands (Europe)
5. Kuwait, Jordan, Bahrain, Pakistan, Libya (Eastern Mediterranean)
6. United States, Canada, Dominican Republic, Columbia, Jamaica, Mexico (Pan American Health Organization).

## What are the key election milestones?

These have been graphically illustrated on the candidature web portal and are summarized hereunder:

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| 22 April 2016 | Secretariat invites MS to propose Candidates. Also posts on WHO website information and election process, rules and decisions and code of conduct |
| 22 September 2016 | Deadline for MS to submit proposal |
| 23 September 2016 | Secretariat releases name publicly along with names of nominating Member states |
| 21 October 2016 | Secretariat translates, duplicates and dispatches proposals. CV and other information to all MS. DG requests medical exam of candidates |
| 24 October 2016 | Secretariat opens a web forum for Q&A and posts candidates’ information on WHO website, MS and candidates may participate in the web forum |
| November 2016 | Candidates forum of max three days chaired by the EB chairman and open to MS. (presentations and Q&A by the candidate) |
| 23 Jan to 1 Feb 2017 | EB short lists five candidates for interview out of which three candidates are submitted to the WHA |
| 22 to 31 May 2017 | WHA appoints the DG |
| 1 July 2017 | Start of term of new DG |

## How many candidates are there in the run so far?

As of April 7, there are three officially declared candidates, Tedros Adhanom, Foreign Minister of Ethiopia; [Philippe Douste-Blazy](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwjk9dfw7PTLAhXIkIMKHfyiBrsQFggcMAA&url=https%3A%2F%2Fen.wikipedia.org%2Fwiki%2FPhilippe_Douste-Blazy&usg=AFQjCNGG7nKCpY4txarbidKxVfg_8x4PhQ&bvm=bv.118443451,d.dmo), Former Health Minister of France and Dr. Sania Nishtar, Former Federal Minister of Pakistan and civil society leader.

## Is a geographic factor relevant in this election?

According to the rules of the WHO DG election, there is no strict geographic rotation formula. However, it is stated that regions that have not had a DG in the past will be given preference in this election. Within this context, it should be noted that three regions have not had a DG in the past, including the WHO African region (WHO AFRO), WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMRO) and the WHO South East Asian Region (SEARO).

## What are the key strengths of Pakistan’s candidate?

Details have been posted in the talking points on the candidate’s web portal. In summary the candidates key strengths are her:

* Strong technical credentials.
* Wide experience (medical doctor, former minister, civil society activist, researcher and experience in the multilateral system as chair of WHO and UN commissions).
* Technical competencies which are a perfect match with the era of the SDGs.
* Strong accountability credentials.

## In addition to the strengths of Pakistan’s candidate, what key points should be made in the initial pitch?

* A WHO reform process is underway after the Ebola crisis and our candidate’s pro-accountability and pro-reform credentials are perceived internationally as suited for WHO’s leadership.
* There is a consensus that the new DG would be merit based and our candidate fulfils all criteria.
* There are three health related UN agencies: UNFPA, UNAIDS and WHO. The former two are already headed by Africans.
* Pakistan is a large country with significant contributions globally, however, it does not have a UN agency head.
* *Point to be made to Muslim countries:* There has never been a Muslim WHO DG.

## Where can the Ambassadors’ access talking points?

Please write to DG UN (aiahmad1966@gmail.com) or the candidate (sania@heartfile.org) if you haven’t received talking points

## Are the talking points generic to all countries?

There are a set of talking points which are generic. However, country-specific talking points for several countries are also available.