



Saturday, 1 February 2020, series of briefings and debates
Civil society perspectives on selected global health topics

Session 4, 16.00-17.30 hrs

WHO and Global Health Governance

Defending the space of civil society at the WHO

The WHO Secretariat's report and proposals on the "Involvement of non-State actors in WHO's governing bodies" (agenda item 22.1, document EB146/33) have the potential to considerably change the terms of civil society involvement in the World Health Assembly and the sessions of the WHO Executive Board. The Secretariat proposals were assessed by G2H2 members in two strategy meetings in December 2019. After these meetings, we proposed to the WHO Secretariat to convene an informal dialogue session of both WHO Member States and non-state actors (in particular: civil society organizations) immediately ahead of EB146, on Sunday 2 February, moderated either by the Secretariat or by the EB chair. Unfortunately, this proposed dialogue session has not materialized.

For the EB session itself, civil society input on this agenda item will be mostly "technical" (and short!) and directly related to the secretariat proposals. Here a "60 Seconds" assessment by Thomas Schwarz, MMI Network:

- Informal meetings: We do not want/need them
- Constituencies: no way!
Grouped statements: yes, if you provide incentives and support!
Limit number of statements: not helpful!
- Limit number of delegates: No, please!
- Consultations, hearings: Yes, finally!
- Pilots in 2020: No way!
- Where to start: STRATEGIES of engagements with different non-state actors (see FENSA evaluation report), and a COMPREHENSIVE reform of governing body meetings

However, the Secretariat proposals are not carved in stone, as interactions since their publication in November have shown.

And, this is where we will start (and already started years ago): The process also needs to be positioned in the global political context (shrinking space of civil society, WHO and UN governance).

Speaker and panellists

- Thomas Schwarz, Medicus Mundi International Network
- Other civil society speakers: Input from the floor
- Gaudenz Silberschmidt and Taina Nakari, WHO Health and Multilateral Partnerships

Moderator: Karolin Seitz

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"We build a strong civil society space in Geneva
for more democratic global health governance."