

## INTERPELLATION TO COUNCIL OF STATE

To Cabinet Minister Acko Ankarberg Johansson (KD)

### **2023/24:203 The Process around IHR**

The five amendments voted in the World Health Assembly (WHA) on 27 May 2022 will become legally binding six months after the ratification period expires on 1 December 2023. However, this vote has not taken place properly as it requires that the amendments of the WHA must be presented to the states at least four months before the vote, which has not happened.

The massive changes to the International Health Regulations (IHR), which 194 delegates from WHO member states will vote on at the WHA meeting in May 2024, will *not* be *announced* before the vote.

This is despite the fact that, according to WHO's statutes, it *is required* that all proposed amendments must be submitted to member states for consideration no later than four months before the vote at the meeting of the WHA.

Recently, at the request of the WGIHR (Working Group IHR), the WHO lawyers have agreed to allow the group to work on the final documents right up to the WHA meeting in May 2024. The four months of consideration thus seem to be completely scrapped!

Sweden's government and authorities thus get no chance to inspect and discuss the content of the amendments before the vote in May 2024. This is of course completely unacceptable and undemocratic, and a protest should immediately be sent to the WHO. Four months is already far too short a time to be able to take a position on over 300 amendments.

Sweden's delegate is expected to vote on something that she or he risks not understanding the legal consequences of or how they affect Sweden's sovereignty in practice.

In addition to the 307 amendments to the IHR, the working group can modify and insert new clauses right up until the time of the vote, i.e. in May 2024.

It is bad enough that IHR can be changed entirely outside the democratic system; no decision needs to be taken by the government or parliament as IHR has been Swedish law since 2006.

The process simply consists of the government appointing a delegate to go to the WHA meeting in Geneva to vote, and we don't yet know who that will be. Last year it was Acko Ankarberg Johansson, the same minister who at the time did not express any concerns about the changes that were voted on and which then applied to the greatly shortened ratification period for submitting reservations and the time that must pass before the WHA's decision enters into force force.

It is important to understand that these proposals from the WHO are no longer recommendations but will become legally binding, which means that all member states *must* follow the WHO's recommendations on vaccination, closures of various social functions, quarantine, samplings, active search for pathogens and more. It is about a total submission to the WHO in terms of measures during a "health emergency" or a "potential health emergency". All writings about non-binding are removed, which means that they become just binding.

All writings about measures to be taken with regard to human rights and freedoms are also removed and replaced with concepts such as equity and proximity.

If the five amendments decided on 27 May 2022 are accepted and take effect six months after the ratification period expires (on 1 December 2023), it means that the proposals that the WHA will vote on in May 2024 will only have a ratification period of ten months, and they will enter into force twelve months (instead of 24) after the vote in the WHA in May 2024, i.e. two months after the expiry of the ratification period.

Therefore I would like to ask the following questions to Cabinet Minister Acko Ankarberg Johansson:

1. Does the Minister consider that the five articles that were voted through at the WHA meeting on May 27, 2022 have taken place in a legally secure, correct and democratic manner, given that they were not presented to the public four months before the decision was made, or does the Minister intend to work for that the Prime Minister notify the WHO in writing before the 1st of

December 2023 that these proposals should be rejected in their entirety?

2. Does the Minister intend to take any initiatives against the background of these articles becoming legally binding for Sweden without a vote taking place in Parliament?
3. Does the Minister consider it acceptable to vote on amendments in May 2024 if they have not been preceded by a debate and come to the attention of the countries at least four months before the vote in the WHA, and if not, does the Minister intend to take any measures regarding this?
4. If there is a vote in the WHA in May 2024, in what way will the Minister ensure that the public, media and authorities get an opportunity to familiarize themselves with all the proposed amendments and what they entail?

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Handed over according to assignment

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