4. Scientific and Technical Advisory Group (STAG)

4.1 Functions

STAG shall have the following functions:

4.1.1 To review, from a scientific and technical standpoint, the content, scope and dimensions of the Special Programme, including the research areas covered and approaches to be adopted.

4.1.2 To recommend priorities within the Special Programme, including the establishment and disestablishment of task forces, and all scientific and technical activities related to the Special Programme.

4.1.3 To provide PCC and the Standing Committee with a continuous and independent evaluation of the scientific and technical aspects of all activities of the Special Programme.

4.1.4 To review the plans of action and the budget for financial periods prepared by the Executing Agency and make proposals to the Standing Committee for possible reallocation of resources within the scientific and technical component of the Special Programme during each financial period.

For these purposes, STAG may propose and present for consideration to the Executing Agency, the Standing Committee or PCC, as appropriate, such technical documents and recommendations as it deems necessary.

4.2 Composition

4.2.1 STAG shall have 15-18 members, who shall serve in their personal capacities to represent the broad range of biomedical and other disciplines required for Special Programme activities.

4.2.2 Members of STAG, including the Chairman, shall be selected, on the basis of scientific and technical competence, by the Executing Agency, in consultation with the Standing Committee and with the endorsement of PCC.

4.2.3 Members of STAG shall not be members of other committees of the Special Programme, principal investigators in studies undertaken by the Special Programme, or Special Programme grantees.

4.2.4 Members of STAG, including the Chairman, shall be appointed to serve for a period of three years, and shall be eligible for immediate reappointment only once.

4.3 Operation

4.3.1 STAG shall meet at least once each year.

4.3.2 The Executing Agency shall provide the secretariat of STAG, including sustained scientific, technical and administrative support.

4.3.3 STAG shall elect a vice-chairman and a rapporteur for each meeting from among its members.

4.3.4 STAG shall prepare an annual report on the basis of a full review of all technical and scientific aspects of the Special Programme. This report, containing its findings and recommendations, shall be submitted to the Executing Agency and to the Standing Committee. The Executing Agency shall submit its comments on the report (if any) to the Standing Committee.

The Standing Committee shall then transmit the report, including any comments of the Executing Agency, together with its own observations and recommendations, to PCC. The Chairman of STAG, or in the absence of the Chairman a member of STAG acting as deputy, shall attend all sessions of PCC.