

# MSF INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL

## **11 October 1986**

MSF sections' first meeting on:

- Setting up new sections
- Communication
- Coordination of operations

## **December 1988**

All the presidents and directors of MSF met for the first time. MSF Holland proposed setting up an International council.

## **February 1989**

MSF Intersection meeting:

International meetings have a non-deciding role. They aim to guarantee the respect of the Code of Good Conduct, to take initiatives at international level, and to serve as a centre for sharing ideas on the MSF project.

## **9 January 1990**

MSF Intersection meeting:

International structure to be set up as MSF European Council.

## **2 July 1990**

MSF European Council meeting:

Endorsement of MSF Belgium's declaration of intent to set up MSF International.

The structure will help to pool national resources, ease dissent between sections, and carry on developing and thinking about the issue of Europe.

## **11–12 October 1990**

MSF International Council Meeting:

MSF international entity to be named MSF International rather than MSF Europe.

## **15 November 1990**

MSF International Council Working Subgroup Meeting: Terms of reference of the International council:

- To be composed of two representatives per section.
- To be tasked with defending common principles and organising MSF's development and distribution of resources.

## **18 April 1991**

MSF International Council Meeting:

- Agreement on the MSF International council decision-making procedures.
- Setting up of veto right for 'large sections'.

## **January 1992**

MSF International Council Meeting:

Melun Declaration to promote operational collaboration between sections.

## **April 1992**

MSF International Council Meeting:

The International council is the decision-maker when it comes to setting up new MSF entities.

## **26 June 1992**

MSF International Council Meeting:

Decision to strengthen the role of the President of the International council and of the Secretary General regarding the enforcement of the decisions taken by the International council in Melun.

## **1-3 December 1994**

MSF International Council retreat in Royaumont

Decision to take an 18-month break regarding the setting up of international movements: an opportunity to review and discuss the MSF identity foundations.

## **3 February 1995**

MSF International Council Meeting:

Decision to have a 'second Melun-type' meeting to reflect on MSF's identity and vision for the future.

## **5-7 October 1995**

Chantilly I meeting:

120 members from all MSF sections' associative and executive bodies met in Chantilly and adopted the 'Chantilly Principles'.

## **8-9 May 1996**

Chantilly II meeting

## **20-21 June 1996**

MSF International Council Meeting:

The MSF International council tasks the International President and the International Secretary with organising working groups and making proposals on:

- MSF structure
- MSF movement rules
- International council role

## **September 1996**

Letter from International President and International Secretary to International council proposing to strengthen international nature of MSF by reorganising the International council structure.

## **31 January 1997**

MSF International Council Meeting with representatives of the 19 MSF entities

- International council enlarged to 19 entities with equal voting rights and
- Creation of a Restricted Committee composed of presidents of six to eight [operational] sections plus the international council president
- International council authority on
  - o Safeguarding the identity of MSF
  - o Giving its approval to the international blueprint for MSF
  - o Taking decisions on shared long-term advocacy/witnessing themes
  - o Taking decisions on MSF expansion policy
  - o Giving advice on the annual plan of the sections
- International council to elect the International Council President

## **June 1998**

James Orbinski elected International Council President.

## **November 1998**

### MSF International Council Meeting:

- International council to distance itself from executive and operational daily tasks.
- Setting up of the International Council Commission on Financial Independence (ICFI) to work on MSF financial independence as a means to promote humanitarian independence.
- 'Mission statement' to be written to provide operational strategic directions to the movement. Objective: 'to bridge the gap between MSF Charter and Chantilly text and the COP [Common Operational Policy]'.

## **June 1999**

### MSF International Council Meeting:

Ultimatum prohibiting MSF Greece from carrying out operations outside Greece.

## **September 1999**

- International council's email vote in favour of MSF Greece exclusion from MSF movement as MSF Greece refused to abide by June 1999 decision.
- Exclusion challenged by MSF Greece.

## **27 November 1999**

### MSF International Council Meeting:

- International dimension of MSF movement to be at forefront in both form and content at Nobel Peace Prize ceremony.
- Nobel prize money to be used to bolster the Access Campaign to Essential Medicines.
- Second vote in favour of MSF Greece expulsion from MSF movement challenged by MSF Greece.

## **26 January 2000**

### MSF International Extraordinary General Assembly (International Council):

Vote in favour of MSF Greece expulsion from MSF Movement in presence of lawyers from both parties.

## **10 June 2000**

### MSF International Council Meeting:

- Series of motions aiming at addressing financial challenges.
- Motion deciding that IC president should be chosen among IC members.
- Morton Rostrup elected International Council President, takes up duties in December 2000.
- Recommendation that as a first step the debate on orientation of internationalisation process of MSF be organised in the 'virtual space'.

## **24 November 2000**

### MSF International Council Meeting:

- Votes in favour of opening a human resources office in Lisbon.
- Creation of the International Council Board (ICB).
- Decision to have a yearly joint meeting between GD 18 and international council.
- Rafa Vilasanjuan appointed secretary general.

## **23 March 2001**

### MSF International Council and Executive Committee meeting:

Acknowledgement of the need to share operational information between operational and partner sections in order to involve the latter.

## **29 June 2001**

### MSF International Council Meeting:

Resolution asking for efficient treatment practices to be rapidly diffused and implemented in the field: ARVs (antiretrovirals) for HIV/AIDS, ACT (artemisinin combination treatment) for malaria, eflornithine for trypanosomiasis.

## **28-30 June 2002**

### MSF International Council Meeting:

- MSF International secretary general to International Council: time to develop a vision for future:
  - o Decision-making processes,
  - o Growth patterns,
  - o Shared operationality,
  - o Role of international council,
  - o Moratorium on new sections.
- Resolutions:
  - o All HIV/AIDS programmes should have an ARV treatment component.
  - o On abusive behaviours.
  - o MSF support to 'the proposal from the DNDi working group on creating a not-for-profit initiative to start relevant fundamental research and development on drugs for neglected diseases (the DNDi)' (two-thirds majority).

## **26 September 2002**

ICP Morton Rostrup discussion paper on 'MSF and its unhealthy growth'.

## **22-24 November 2002**

### MSF International Council Meeting:

- Two people appointed to look into future reintegration of MSF Greece within the MSF movement.
- Tense debate on consequences of MSF Holland's refusal to financially support DNDi seen as challenging the legitimacy of the IC decision.
- MSF Holland president asked to report back to his board regarding the November 2002 International Council's discussion and position for reconsideration at the 2003 General Assembly.

## **22 November 2002**

### MSF International Council Meeting:

- IC duty to monitor development of the movement and give guidance to executive.
- Growth in MSF offices had been out of proportion with growth in field activities.

## **27-29 June 2003**

### MSF International Council Meeting:

International projects decided by IC with a two-thirds majority to be binding for all sections and financed through international office (IO) running costs. IO costs to be shared by all members of MSF International, including absentees and dissidents.

## **21-23 November 2003**

### MSF International Council Meeting:

- Rowan Gillies elected International Council President

- Marine Buissonnière appointed International Secretary General.
- MSF Spain assigned the practical implementation of reintegration of former MSF Greek section in the movement.
- Working group to establish rules organising decision-making process and accountability in the movement's structure.
- Endorsement of *'the decision by the Executive to move the international office from Brussels to Geneva, and calls for an extraordinary general assembly, when appropriate next year'*.

#### **25-27 June 2004**

##### MSF International Council Meeting:

- Creation of International council board treasurer position, in charge, together with the international secretary general, of endorsing and signing international accounts.
- ICP Rowan Gillies letter of resignation over feeling powerless to reduce tensions in the movement. Resignation refused and IC commitment to strengthen support.

#### **25-27 June 2004**

##### MSF International Council Meeting:

Endorsement of reintegration framework presented by MSF Spain and former MSF Greek association, previously ratified by general assemblies of both associations.

#### **8-9 October 2004**

##### MSF International Council Meeting:

International steering committee to follow up Arjan Erkel court case. The international council board to be referent platform in case of deadlock.

#### **19-21 November 2004**

##### MSF International Council Meeting:

- Resolution: provision of comprehensive reproductive health care essential in all MSF general medical programmes and availability of safe abortion to be integrated as a part of reproductive health care.
- Decision to share Arjan Erkel court case costs between all sections.
- Decision to organise a new Chantilly-type process.

#### **June 2005**

'What is La Mancha process?' Memo from the ICP Rowan Gillies.

#### **24-26 June 2005**

##### MSF International Council Meeting:

- International executive committee (ExCom) to set up a three-year expenditure plan for all funds related to December 2004 tsunami in South-East Asia.
- Reactivation of international finance commission.
- Resolution: *'the International Council President should be a medical or paramedical and be an elected board member of an MSF section'*.
- Resolution supporting MSF Switzerland proposal for a strong 'drop the [Erkel] case' communication campaign.

#### **September 2005**

Rowan Gillies' memo on ICP role.

#### **22 October 2005**

##### MSF International Council Meeting:

Working group tasked to *'improve the governance of the international association of MSF through the revision of the statutes and internal rules'*.

#### **24 November 2005**

##### MSF International Council Meeting:

Publication of MSF first audited international accounts.

#### **26-27 November 2005**

##### MSF International Council Meeting:

Agreement on organisation by sections of La Mancha-related debates in the field and in headquarters.

#### **8-10 March 2006**

La Mancha conference.

#### **11 March 2006**

##### MSF International Council Meeting:

Rowan Gillies insists on vice-president to be elected and to share workload with the president.

#### **24-25 June 2006**

##### MSF International Council Meeting:

- Establishment and vote of La Mancha agreement.
- Agreement on La Mancha agreement being a reference document complement to Charter and Chantilly document, a commitment towards clarifying and strengthening the movement's governance and on introduction being part of the Agreement.
- Measures and resolutions to accelerate implementation of main decisions taken. For this purpose, extension of mandates of several working groups and creation of others:
  - o Renewal of Chantilly Principles clarification working group, tasked with organising continuation of debate on this issue together with modification of MSF International Statutes group.
  - o International office tasked with carrying out a review of existing measures taken at international and national level and remaining gaps in MSF's policy towards national staff as a socially responsible employer and their access to associative life.
  - o Working group tasked with prioritising issues required for implementation of La Mancha Agreement in preparation for development of an IC strategic plan.
  - o Approval of status of GD19-EXDIR as its executive counterpart.
- Working group to clarify division of roles between executive and associative at international level, tasked with liaising with executive working group on governance.
- o Reorganisation of miniAGs' process, building on review:
  - o two days of debate, one on international issues set up by the international council, the other one on national issues organised by national boards.
  - o miniAGs become *'Field Associative Debates'* (FADs)
  - o Working group to define the role and accountability of the two international associative platforms, the international council and the international council board and to liaise with executive working group on governance.

#### **July 2006**

Christophe Fournier elected International Council President, takes up duties in December 2006.

#### **25 September 2006**

##### MSF International Council Meeting:

- New terms of reference of the International Secretary General (ISG).

- ISG position opening.

### **2-3 December 2006**

#### MSF International Council Meeting:

- Priorities for La Mancha implementation: national staff; growth; mutual accountability, association; IC scope of decision-making regarding its strategic direction guiding and MSF social mission implementation's overseeing.
- Terms of reference of International council vice-president (ICVP).
- Revised statutes of MSF International and first set of internal rules.

### **March 2007**

#### MSF International Council and Executive Committee Meeting:

Need to define a rationale and criteria regarding creation of new entities not based on sections/partner sections model:

- New entities should bring operational added value and be endorsed by IC, responsible for monitoring their development
- IO to assess entities opened since 2002 and possible interesting entities to open in the future.
- Support idea of exploring new international ways to improve medical epidemiological and operational research, and to rationalise logistic supply and HR training capacities
- Financial burden and benefits to be shared between sections; working group to establish a three-year controlled growth and redistribution plan.

### **June 2007**

#### MSF International Council Meeting:

- Rejection of three-year interim plan proposed by ICB but endorsement of recommendations on rationale for growth, operational centres and new entities.
- Acknowledgement that 'so-called yet to be MSF Africa initiative' in keeping with the *La Mancha* spirit, promoting both new entities associative dimension and national staff participation in associative activities.
  - o Questions about MSF Africa initiative welcoming only African MSFers, the legal set-up of the entity and the way it would benefit the MSF movement.
  - o Providing further exploration of these issues, the international council accepted that the Africa initiative move forward but did not allow this entity to use the MSF name. They asked the OCA to find a way to link this 'yet to be' MSF new entity to their association.
- Endorsement of state of play and recommendations of report on access to associative life for national staff.
- Creation of MSF International associative coordinator position.

### **26 June 2008**

#### MSF International Council Meeting:

Endorsement of recommendations:

- Representation and Fundraising to be considered as the two 'standalone' arguments potentially justifying creation of a new entity.
- Entity defined as 'legal and executive structure with concrete ongoing activities'.
- Three categories of entities with respective characteristics (branch office, delegate office and section) to adequately reflect different functions/roles and position of entities in MSF movement.

- Names of MSF entities to reflect movement as a whole, e.g. MSF (Médecins Sans Frontières) in South Africa, MSF in Brazil.
- Name/trademark in national and international language, logo and acronym to be registered as property of MSF International through International Office.
- MSF entities in Brazil, UAE and South Africa endorsed as branch offices.

### **22-23 September 2008**

#### MSF International Council and Executive Committee meeting:

- 'Elements of reflection on the evolution of the international platforms roles and responsibilities'.
- Associative governance group replaced by a new working group, composed of ICP, ISG, MSF Belgium president and OCA general director.
- Associative task force:
  - o to work on proposals regarding the definition of meaningful membership, and possible involvement of new associative initiatives in movement associative life.
  - o to explore the idea of an international membership.

### **29-30 November 2008**

#### MSF International Council Meeting:

- Associations' presidents should be medical. Rule to be included in the IC statutes.
- General orientation on sharing of tasks and responsibilities between IC and ICB.

### **29 February 2009**

#### MSF International Council & Executive Directors meeting:

Terms of reference of International Working Group on Governance.

### **26 June 2009**

#### MSF International Council Meeting:

- IC and ICB new terms of reference for interim period during phase II of governance reform process (GRP).
- Three standing committees: medical, financial and associative.

### **9 December 2009**

#### MSF International Council Meeting:

- Unni Karunakara elected International Council President, takes up duties in June 2010.
- Resolutions framing GRP:
  - o Proposal on associative governance reform to be developed in direction of an elected international board (IB), including looking at possibility of an international general assembly (IGA) and/or international membership, with pros/cons for recommendations/choices.
  - o Proposal to be presented at March 2010 Conference, then approved by IC and sent to GAs for endorsing.
  - o Final decision to be taken by IC in June 2010.

### **14 March 2010**

#### MSF International Council Meeting:

Proposal on associative governance:

- IGA to be recognised by all entities and associative members as highest authority in the movement.
- IGA to delegate specific powers to IB for supervision of social mission and resource sharing in compliance with MSF movement strategic multi-year vision.

- IB to come into effect in June 2011 and whole transition towards IGA to be achieved in 2012.
- International association of individual members to be established by 2012, with membership open to any associative member of existing entities and others meeting associative criteria.
- GAs asked to approve proposal's general orientation.

### **25-27 June 2010**

#### MSF International Council Meeting:

Discussion and clarification of GAs' recommendations and vote of revised proposal main lines.

Next steps to be taken:

- Revision of MSF International statutes for compliance with reform outcomes.
- Set-up and definition of membership criteria for an association of individual members, 'movement-wide association' (MWA) and modalities of its representation at IGA.

### **December 2010**

#### MSF International Council Meeting:

Movement-wide association (MWA) to be incorporated into statutes as a constituency of individual members with two seats on the IGA.

### **24-26 June 2011**

#### MSF International Council Meeting:

New statutes of the 'Médecins Sans Frontières International' Association approved.

### **16-18 December 2011**

#### First MSF International General Assembly:

- MSF Brazil, MSF East Africa, MSF Latin America and MSF South Africa associations presented and endorsed as MSF institutional members.
- Election of six IB members.