

The Regional Committee,

Recalling World Health Assembly resolutions WHA32.40; WHA36.12, WHA42.20, WHA55.10, WHA57.10, WHA57.16, WHA58.26 and its own resolutions SEA/RC54/R2 on public health problems caused by alcohol use,

Recognizing that the adult per capita alcohol consumption in the South-East Asia Region has almost doubled in the last decade and that the patterns, context and overall level of alcohol consumption has a negative impact on health and cause serious social and economic consequences to the population, especially the poor,

Appreciating the continued efforts of Member States in adopting and implementing comprehensive national alcohol control policies and effective strategies for reducing public health problems caused by alcohol use,

Having considered the document SEA/RC59/15 which highlights various policy options to reduce public health problems caused by alcohol use, through concerted efforts by the government, public agencies, civil society and the private sector having no conflict of interest,

Noting the consequences of certain trade agreements that facilitate the free flow of and investment in alcohol, which boosts the consumption and negative impact of alcohol in the Region, and

Noting the unique characteristics of regional/national alcohol consumption and related problems e.g. linkage of alcohol to poverty, payday drinking, indigenous alcoholic beverages, which require context-specific policy and interventions,

1. ENDORSES the document Alcohol Consumption Control – Policy Options in South-East Asia Region (SEA/RC59/15) along the lines and amendments made by Members, to help reduce public health problems caused by alcohol use as a minimum framework for alcohol control policy and providing strategic guidance to Member States;

2. URGES Member States:

a) to establish/strengthen institutional capacity, through multi-sectoral partnership, in order to generate information on consumption of alcohol and related problems based on socioeconomic strata, alcohol marketing strategies, commercial aspects and revenue generated from alcohol, to be used for policy, planning, monitoring and evaluation;

b) to encourage appropriate participation of stakeholders having no conflict of interest, to develop comprehensive national alcohol control policies, action plans and

programmes for reducing public health problems caused by alcohol use, based on the Regional Policy Options as a minimum framework;

c) to assess the potential impact of certain trade agreements on alcohol consumption and related problems so that effective policy interventions could be formulated, and

d) to establish/strengthen appropriate mechanism(s) for effective planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of national programmes, with adequate institutional capacity and funding, and

3. REQUESTS the Regional Director:

a) to support Member States in building and strengthening institutional capacities for developing: information systems, policies, action plans, programmes, guidelines and monitoring/evaluation of programmes on prevention of harm from alcohol use;

b) to hold a biennial regional forum of key partners from Member States and other international partners to share progress, experiences and lessons on alcohol control programmes, and

c) to report on the progress on the implementation of the Alcohol Consumption Control – Policy Options to the sixty-first session of the Regional Committee in 2008.