

The Regional Committee,

Having considered the annual report on sexually transmitted infections (STI), including HIV/AIDS;<sup>1</sup>

Noting with deep concern the continued increase in HIV infections and AIDS cases in the Region, the high prevalence and increasing incidence of STI in selected areas and populations, and their potential negative impact on people and health systems;

Recognizing the importance of reinforcing healthy lifestyle choices;

Further recognizing the role that health promotion plays in educating vulnerable groups, particularly youth, about the dangers of high-risk behaviour;

Appreciating the positive results observed from condom promotion and health education programmes targeting commercial sex workers and their clients in Cambodia, the extension of these programmes and the establishment of similar pilot projects in other countries of the Region;

Further appreciating the results of well-targeted prevention programmes among specific vulnerable population groups, such as injecting drug users in selected countries of the Region;

Observing that high-level political commitment has been a key component of successful programmes;

Noting that there have been recent global developments that have the potential to improve access to and use of antiretroviral treatments, and of therapy for opportunistic infections;

Further noting the potential for an increase in drug-resistant HIV in the Region;

Noting the high rates of tuberculosis (TB) in the Region, leading to TB/HIV co-infection;

Appreciating the financial support received by several Member States in the Region from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria;

Acknowledging the importance of strengthening policies and legislation to support STI and HIV/AIDS prevention and control programmes;

1. URGES Member States:

(1) to strengthen epidemiological surveillance, including behavioural surveillance, of STI and HIV/AIDS;

(2) to promote lifestyle choices, such as delay of sexual activity, or safe sex practices, that lead to reductions in transmission of STI and HIV/AIDS;

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<sup>1</sup> Document WPR/RC54/6.

- (3) to strengthen health promotion targeted at vulnerable groups, particularly youth, in the context of an integrated approach;
- (4) to continue to reinforce primary prevention of HIV transmission, including targeting those at greatest risk of HIV infection with effective condom promotion programmes, appropriate management and control of STI, and harm reduction programmes for injecting drug users;
- (5) to continue to reinforce blood safety programmes;
- (6) to further investigate the feasibility, costs and benefits of programmes to prevent HIV transmission from infected mothers to their infants;
- (7) to make greater efforts to involve men in all aspects of HIV/AIDS prevention programmes;
- (8) to strengthen the implementation of policies and programmes to reduce stigmatization of patients with AIDS and to give effect to the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS adopted by the twenty-sixth special session of the General Assembly, in particular the clauses stressing gender equality and empowerment of women (clause 14), recognizing the essential role of the full realization of human rights (clause 16), affirming the key role of partnerships (clause 32), and acknowledging the particular roles played by young people and people living with HIV/AIDS (clause 33);
- (9) to develop or strengthen national policies for HIV/AIDS care that are comprehensive and multisectoral, improve access to treatment for HIV/AIDS, including access to drugs for HIV and AIDS, and that mitigate the effects of living with HIV/AIDS;
- (10) to prepare health systems to meet the increasing demand for care from growing numbers of AIDS patients;
- (11) to secure and strengthen political commitment and mobilization of additional resources for HIV/AIDS programmes within an integrated approach;
- (12) to strengthen multisectoral collaboration;

2. REQUESTS the Regional Director:

- (1) to continue to improve the regional surveillance system for STI and HIV/AIDS and related blood-borne infections and surveillance of drug-resistant HIV;
- (2) to work with Member States to promote healthy lifestyle choices;
- (3) to further strengthen technical collaboration with Member States, paying particular attention to:
  - (a) primary prevention through condom promotion;
  - (b) appropriate evidence-based strategies for harm reduction among injecting drug users;
  - (c) appropriate strategies for the prevention of HIV transmission from infected mothers to their infants;

- (d) blood safety policies;
  - (e) care for AIDS patients, including access to drugs for HIV and AIDS treatment;
  - (f) appropriate policies to prevent drug-resistant HIV;
  - (g) TB/HIV co-infection;
  - (h) appropriate legislation, including that in support of the United Nations General Assembly Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and in relation to access to HIV/AIDS drugs;
- (4) to strengthen WHO's coordination with UNAIDS, its other cosponsors and partners and to increase mobilization of resources;
- (5) to continue to provide support to Member States for the preparation of high-quality proposals to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the implementation of approved projects;
- (6) to continue to report annually to the Regional Committee on the situation of STI and HIV/AIDS in the Region.