

***Closing Remarks***

***by***

***Dr Samlee Plianbangchang  
Regional Director, WHO South-East Asia***

***at***

***Regional Consultation on Social Determinants of Health***

***WHO/SEARO, New Delhi, India  
15-16 September 2005***

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Distinguished Commissioners;

Representatives from Member States;

Representatives from bilateral and multilateral agencies, and civil society;

Colleagues;

Ladies and gentlemen;

- I was informed that the Regional Consultation had been lively, interactive and productive throughout.
- The Secretariat briefed me on the major issues and challenges that emerged out of the deliberations.
- The meeting has given us an opportunity to discuss in-depth the critical issues of Social Determinants of Health.
- We identified concrete steps forward to make a real difference in reducing health inequalities.

- If we are to make a real difference, we have also to carefully study the socio-political conditions in countries, and promote healthy public policies.
- There is indeed a need to promote healthy behaviours and lifestyle; and address sociocultural issues in the most appropriate context.
- In fact, there are too many things to be done; how we address them strategically is crucial.
- Health is a social goal.
- And we accept that responsibility for health and managing health inequity has to be shared by all concerned sectors.
- Outside the health sector, there exist an array of opportunities institutions, individuals and organizations engaged in human development.
- I am very happy that sectors beyond health participated in this regional consultation.
- This is an indication of our willingness to work together in addressing inequity in health.

- In this process we can draw strength from the positive experiences in the Region in addressing these issues.
- We plan to include this subject in future meetings of Health Ministers and the Regional Committee, so that we can move forward with adequate policy and political back up.
- As highlighted during the course of consultation, we have a fertile environment to refocus on the social conditions and determinants.
- The current global development agenda, and the Millennium Development Goals, presents an excellent opportunity in this regard.
- Since the MDGs recognize the interdependence between health and social conditions, the opportunity to promote health policies that tackle the roots of unfair and avoidable human suffering should not be missed.
- With this, I would like to gratefully thank the distinguished Commissioners and the Commission Secretariat who travelled a long way to come for enlightening us on the issues before us.
- I hope for their continued support to our work in this area.
- I thank participants from Member States who had provided extremely useful inputs to the Consultation.

- Valuable contributions from representatives from bilateral and multilateral agencies, and civil society are very much appreciated.
- I sincerely thank them all.
- Our WHO Colleagues from Headquarters and Western Pacific Regional Office have actively participated in the course of discussions, and provided much needed inputs in the process.
- With appreciation, I thank them overwhelmingly.
- Our SEARO staff members have worked hard to ensure success of the Consultation.
- Their work in this regard is very much appreciated.
- My thanks are also extended to them.
- Finally, I wish the distinguished Commissioners and all other participants all the best, and a safe journey home.
- Thank you.