SEA/RC53/R7 FOOD SAFETY

The Regional Committee,

Recalling World Health Assembly resolution WHA53.15, relating to food safety,

Recognizing that foodborne illnesses associated with microbial pathogens, biotoxins and chemical contamination represent a serious threat to public health in the Region,

Aware of the need for improved surveillance systems to evaluate the burden of foodborne diseases and to develop evidence-based regional control strategies,

Realizing that Member States in the Region primarily rely for their food supply on traditional agriculture and small to medium-sized food industry, and that the food safety systems in most countries need strengthening,

Highlighting the need to make the largest possible use of information from the developing countries in risk assessment for setting reasonable international standards, and

Emphasizing the need for technical and institutional strengthening and capacity building in the countries of the Region,

1. URGES Member States:

   • to adopt the 10-Point Regional Strategy for Food Safety as a framework for development of national food safety programmes, and
   • to provide adequate resources to establish and strengthen food safety programmes in close collaboration with appropriate national food authorities, nutrition and epidemiological surveillance programmes, and

2. REQUESTS the Regional Director:

   • to support Member States in the implementation of the 10-Point Regional Strategy for Food Safety;
   • to pro-actively pursue action on behalf of the countries of this region so that the level of technological development in the countries of this region is taken into account in the adoption and application of international standards of food safety;
   • to provide necessary technical assistance and promote research in formulating evidence-based strategies for the control of foodborne diseases, particularly risk factors and simple methods for management and control of these health risks;
• to facilitate the collection of data and risk assessment studies through research centres in the countries of the Region;

• to support capacity-building in Member States and facilitate the involvement of the concerned national health authorities in the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, and

• to hold a regional consultation to review food safety issues in the Region.

Seventh Meeting, 7 September 2000