The Regional Committee,

Noting that one-third of the world's 45 million blind live in the Region, that a majority of them are poor, and that most blindness is caused by preventable conditions such as cataract, trachoma infections and Vitamin A deficiency, and

Acknowledging that the global and regional strategies for "Vision 2020: The Right to Sight" were successfully developed by WHO, Member States and other national and international partners with the aim of eliminating avoidable blindness by the year 2020,

1. URGES Member States:

   • to expedite the adoption of the "Vision 2020 Strategy" in all Member States in the Region;

   • to clear the backlog of, and cater to, current cases of cataract by adopting various interventions, including development, in a time-bound manner, of appropriate human resources depending on the country needs;

   • to promote awareness on the causes, prevention and treatment of various eye disorders, and

   • to promote expansion of primary eye care, and transfer of appropriate technology through partnerships, and

2. REQUESTS the Regional Director:

   • to provide necessary support to enhance and expand national programmes for prevention of blindness in Member States to increase coverage of primary eye care services, and

   • to share and exchange experiences on successful strategies to prevent blindness.

Seventh Meeting, 7 September 2000