Recalling World Health Assembly Resolutions WHA40.27, WHA42.42 WHA46.18, WHA47.9 and WHA48.10, and its own resolution SEA/RC39/R5 relating to maternal health and quality of care, as well as the recent WHO initiative on Making Pregnancy Safer,

Noting with concern that 40 per cent of the global maternal deaths occur in the South-East Asia Region and that a majority of the Member States had a maternal mortality rate of more than 100 per 100 000 live births in the late-1990s, and

Recognizing that despite affordable technologies to prevent such deaths, a large majority of women, particularly the poor and the marginalized, do not always have effective access to such life-saving technologies,

1. ENDORSES the proposed Regional Strategy for Reduction of Maternal Mortality in the South-East Asia Region;

2. URGES Member States:
   - to review and/or update national policy for maternal health to ensure women’s access to quality care, with an emphasis on facilitating skilled attendance at birth and enhancing accessibility to essential obstetrics and post-abortion care;
   - to incorporate the national strategy for reduction of maternal mortality and morbidity as an important element of health sector reform, and
   - to undertake regular reviews and monitoring, including research studies towards improving the coverage and quality of maternal health care, particularly for the poor and the marginalized, and

3. REQUESTS the Regional Director:
   - to intensify technical collaboration with Member States and relevant partners in order to accelerate the implementation of interventions for making pregnancy safer, including the provision of skilled birth attendants, and
   - to promote and support national efforts in undertaking regular reviews and monitoring, including research studies towards improving the coverage and quality of maternal health care.