SEA/RC57/R4  IODINE DEFICIENCY DISORDERS IN THE SOUTH-EAST ASIA REGION

The Regional Committee,

Recalling World Health Assembly resolutions WHA49.13 and WHA52.24 on prevention and control of iodine deficiency disorders,

Concerned that iodine deficiency remains a major challenge to the health and development of the population in the South-East Asia Region, and that in addition to causing goitre, dwarfism and other anomalies, it may result in stillbirth and miscarriage, brain damage and intellectual impairment,

Recognizing that the elimination of iodine deficiency will herald a major public health triumph and contribute to national and regional economic development,

Noting further that many Member States have established IDD prevention and control programmes,

Mindful of the concern about existing salt iodine monitoring and quality control mechanisms and legislative procedures,

Concerned that the goal for IDD elimination is 2005, but that progress towards achieving this goal has slowed down, and

Taking into account that the amount of effort required to achieve the goal of IDD elimination will vary in countries,

1. URGES Member States:
   a. to reaffirm their commitment to early and sustainable elimination of IDD by ensuring universal salt iodization including required iodine content at the consumer level through harmonizing partnerships with salt manufacturers, and
   b. to take urgent measures to accelerate the implementation of IDD prevention and control programmes by according due priority so as to eliminate IDD at the earliest, and

2. REQUESTS the Regional Director:
   a. to strengthen cooperation with Member States, at their request, and with international organizations, in providing technical assistance for training, and establishing/strengthening quality control assurance systems in close collaboration with the salt industry, including facilitation of networking of reference laboratories for iodine estimation;
   b. to strengthen advocacy efforts for renewed commitments to these programmes, including, where possible, appropriate research with relevant partners;
   c. to provide technical support for the development/adaptation of different methodologies required to strengthen the programme, preparation of guidelines, and promotion of exchange of information and creating awareness to increase public demand for iodized salt for human and animal consumption, and
   d. to report on the results achieved in implementing this resolution to the sixtieth session of the Regional Committee in 2007.

Fifth Meeting,
9 September 2004