The Regional Committee,

Recognizing the importance of the health workforce and its essential contribution to health systems functioning, which further contributes to the health of the population,

Noting with concern that the critical shortage of health workforce remains a problem in the South-East Asia Region and has not improved significantly, while inequitable distribution further exacerbates the problems of access to the health workforce in rural and remote areas,

Reaffirming the 2006 Dhaka Declaration on Strengthening the Health Workforce in Countries of the South-East Asia Region,

Recalling Regional Committee resolution (SEA/RC59/R6) on Strengthening the Health Workforce in the South-East Asia Region and the Regional Strategic Plan for Health Workforce Development adopted in 2007,

Acknowledging that some progress has been achieved with several Member States developing their national strategies and/or country human resources for health (HRH) profiles, though these plans need adequate funding for effective implementation and monitoring outcomes,
Further noting the 16 recommendations in the WHO publication entitled “Increasing access to health workers in remote and rural areas through improved retention: global policy recommendations” and the 11 recommendations in the WHO publication entitled “Transforming and scaling up health professionals’ education and training: WHO education guidelines 2013”,

Noting that some Member States in the Region have limited health workforce production capacity which hampers self-sufficiency and will require effective collaboration across Member States,

Also recalling Regional Committee resolution SEA/RC65/R7 based on which Member States had conducted a comprehensive assessment of the current situation of health workforce education and training, and noting that these assessments serve as a foundation for evidence-based policy formulation and implementation for strengthening health workforce education systems, and

Having considered the Regional strategy on strengthening health workforce education and training in the South-East Asia Region,

1. **ENDORSES** the Regional strategy on strengthening health workforce education and training in the South-East Asia Region (2014–2019); and

2. **URGES** Member States:

   (a) to take steps, in the context of their existing national strategies on health workforce, to integrate and implement the Regional strategy on strengthening health workforce education and training in the South-East Asia Region, and in particular to:

      (i) increase capacity of quality training for an adequate number of relevant health workforce through institutional and instructional reforms;

      (ii) ensure educational and other strategies that will enable the health workforce to serve and sustain their contributions in rural communities or places where they are most needed;

      (iii) strengthen the synergies between health workforce education systems and health-care systems;

   (b) to strengthen the implementation of the 16 WHO global policy recommendations on increasing access to health workers in remote and rural areas through improved retention;
(c) to establish/strengthen health workforce information systems for monitoring progress, supporting management and appropriate policy actions;

(d) to consider reviewing periodically, preferably every three years, achievements and challenges of the implementation of health workforce strengthening; and

3. REQUESTS the Regional Director:

(a) to support Member States in their implementation of the Regional strategy on strengthening health workforce education and training in the South-East Asia Region (2014–2019); and

(b) to report progress on the implementation of health workforce development to the Regional Committee for South-East Asia every two years starting 2016 for the next decade.

Sixth session, 12 September 2014