

## REPORT OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE

### INTRODUCTION

The thirty-first session of the Regional Committee for South-East Asia was held in Ulan Bator, Mongolia, from 22 to 28 August 1978. Representatives from all the Member States attended the session. The meeting was also attended by the representatives of UNDP and UNICEF (for list of participants, see Annex 1).

The session was opened by the outgoing Chairman, Dr Prakorb Tuchinda (Thailand), who welcomed the delegates. In his speech he appreciated the role of WHO in the efforts for health development by the countries of the Region, and expressed confidence that the cooperation and collaboration of WHO would go a long way towards successfully tackling health problems in future years.

In his inaugural address, Mr T. Ragcha, First Vice-Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Mongolian People's Republic, exhorted the representatives of the Member States not only to foster mutual cooperation but also to enlarge the scope of collaboration with WHO in order to solve the health problems confronting the countries of the Region.

Addressing the meeting, Dr Nyam-Osor, Minister of Public Health, Mongolia, expressed his satisfaction that WHO had been taking various innovative measures in promoting the health of the people of the Region, and voiced the hope that the deliberations during the session would contribute to accelerating the pace of health development in the Region.

Dr Halfdan Mahler, Director-General of WHO, in his message to the Regional Committee, made an appeal to the Member States for an unequivocal political commitment towards the development of health through the implementation of socially relevant priority programmes, with clear objectives, using appropriate technology. He requested them to provide guidance for shaping the Organization in such a manner that it would best respond to the needs of the countries.

The Regional Director, in his address, traced the achievements of the collaborative efforts of WHO and the Member States in the South-East Asia Region during the past three decades. He said that a growing understanding of the health problems and an increasing commitment on the part of governments to improve the health of their people had made the task of WHO easier in effectively fulfilling its constitutional role of coordination and technical cooperation in the field of health development. He thanked the Government of Mongolia for the invitation to hold this session in Ulan Bator.

At the first meeting, a sub-committee on credentials was appointed consisting of representatives from Burma, Nepal and Sri Lanka. The sub-committee met twice, under the chairmanship of the representative from Nepal, to examine the credentials of the representatives of the Member countries and submitted two reports (SEA/RC31/22 and Add.1) recognizing the validity of the credentials presented by all the representatives; these reports were approved by the Regional Committee.

The Regional Committee elected Professor G. Jambaa (Mongolia) as Chairman and Dr B. Sankaran (India) as Vice-Chairman.

The Regional Committee established a Sub-Committee on Programme Budget and adopted the terms of reference of the Sub-Committee (SEA/RC31/4). Under the chairmanship of Professor J. Sulianti Saroso (Indonesia), the Sub-Committee held three meetings and submitted a report (Annex 3), which was subsequently approved by the Regional Committee.

Dr Nadda Sriyabhaya (Thailand) was elected Chairman of the technical discussions, which were on "The Expanded Programme on Immunization", and adopted the agenda for the discussions (SEA/RC31/5 and Add.1). The report, along with the recommendations resulting from the technical discussions, was presented to and noted by the Regional Committee (see Annex 4), which adopted a resolution on the subject (resolution SEA/RC31/R1).

"Drug Policy, including Traditional Medicines, in the Context of Primary Health Care" was chosen as the topic for the technical discussions to be held during the thirty-second session of the Regional Committee (resolution SEA/RC31/R11).

The Regional Committee considered and approved the draft of the Charter for Health Development (resolution SEA/RC31/R9).

The Committee decided to form a group consisting of representatives from all the countries in order to study WHO's organizational structure in the light of its functions.

The Regional Committee decided to hold its thirty-second session in New Delhi in September 1979 (resolution SEA/RC31/R10). The Committee adopted twelve resolutions, which have been issued separately in the resolutions series and form Part I of this report.

Parts II, III and IV of the Report contain the summaries of important matters raised during the meeting. A complete list of documents is given in Annex 5. The agenda for the session is given as Annex 2.

All participants expressed their delight at having been able to hold the session in the beautiful setting of Ulan Bator and also expressed their appreciation of the excellent arrangements made and the warm hospitality extended by the Government of the Mongolian People's Republic.