

The Regional Committee,

Noting that tuberculosis kills more youths and adults than any other infectious disease in the world;

Noting further that tuberculosis is re-emerging as a major public health problem in the Region, as demonstrated by the steady increase in notified tuberculosis cases during the last decade and the fact that 29% of global tuberculosis cases are found in the Western Pacific Region;

Noting that political commitment has not yet been translated into increased resources for tuberculosis control;

Recognizing that tuberculosis has far-reaching socioeconomic impacts, especially in developing countries, because the disease mainly affects the poor and people of productive age;

Recognizing further that tuberculosis is also a serious public health problem in newly industrialized and developed countries;

Acknowledging that the directly-observed treatment, short course (DOTS) strategy is the most cost-effective way of controlling tuberculosis, saving the lives of patients and preventing the emergence of drug resistance;

Expressing concern that only 46% of notified tuberculosis cases in the Region were enrolled in DOTS programmes in 1998;

Expressing further concern at the negative impact of HIV on tuberculosis in some countries of the Region;

1. DECLARES a 'Tuberculosis crisis' in the Western Pacific Region;
2. URGES Member States:
 - (1) to give high priority, and to allocate sufficient resources, to strengthening tuberculosis control;
 - (2) to aim to increase the percentage of tuberculosis patients enrolled in DOTS programmes so that the regional targets of 60% of notified cases to be treated by DOTS by 2001 and 100% by 2005 are achieved;
 - (3) to achieve and maintain a cure rate of at least 85% by ensuring high-quality DOTS implementation, as a minimum;
 - (4) to implement surveillance for drug-resistant tuberculosis by 2001;
 - (5) to establish regular surveillance and reporting of the impact of HIV on tuberculosis by 2001, if this is appropriate;
3. REQUESTS the Regional Director:
 - (1) to give tuberculosis control high priority and to make "Stop TB in the Western Pacific Region" a special project of the Western Pacific Regional Office;
 - (2) to take all possible steps to raise awareness of the tuberculosis problem based on evidence from epidemiological studies and cost-benefit and socioeconomic analysis and to take all necessary measures to influence leading political figures to translate political commitment into increased financial resources;
 - (3) to strengthen technical collaboration with Member States in order to introduce and expand the DOTS strategy in the Region in the context of health sector reform and poverty alleviation;
 - (4) to strengthen partnerships with other technical and funding agencies in the Western Pacific Region;
 - (5) to report annually on progress in tuberculosis control to the Regional Committee.