

## **BRASILIA DECLARATION ON ALCOHOL PUBLIC POLICIES**

The participants of the First Pan American Conference on Alcohol Public Policies held in Brasilia, Brazil, November 28th-30th 2005 are:

Alarmed that alcohol is the leading risk factor for the burden of disease in the Americas and that alcohol-related harms have been neglected in the Region;

Recalling and reaffirming the World Health Assembly Resolution (WHA) 58.26 of the World Health Organization, which urges Member States to develop, implement and evaluate effective strategies and programs for reducing the negative health and social consequences of the harmful use of alcohol;

Recognizing that scientific evidence has established that hazardous and harmful consumption of alcohol causes premature death, disease and disability;

Concerned that in many countries there is significant unrecorded alcohol consumption, and recorded production and consumption of alcohol is at high and rising levels;

Recognizing that the harm done by alcohol is a national and regional public health and social problem in the Americas, despite the cultural differences between the nations;

Recognizing that alcohol is also a cause of violent deaths, intentional and unintentional injuries, particularly among youth;

Noting that alcohol is also a cause of death, disability and social harm to people other than the drinker;

Aware that the studies that exist on the costs of alcohol use suggest that alcohol problems create heavy economic as well as health and social burdens;

Concerned that alcohol interacts with poverty to produce even greater consequences for those who do not have access to basic resources for health and sustenance;

Concerned that indigenous populations, migrants, street children and other highly vulnerable populations in the Americas suffer disproportionately from the negative impacts of alcohol;

Emphasizing the risk of harm due to alcohol consumption during pregnancy;

Recognizing the threats posed to public health by the increased availability and accessibility of alcoholic beverages in many countries in the Americas;

Concerned that alcohol advertising, promotion and sponsorship are reaching young people, thereby undercutting efforts to reduce and prevent underage alcohol use;

Mindful of existing compelling evidence on the effectiveness of strategies and measures aimed at reducing alcohol consumption and related harm;

Recognizing that the approaches related to harmful consumption of alcohol should include different models and strategies for the reduction of social and health harms;

Recognizing that international cooperation and participation of all countries in the Region are needed to reduce the negative health and social consequences of alcohol consumption;

We recommend that:

1. Preventing and reducing alcohol consumption-related harms be considered a public health priority for action in all countries of the Americas.
2. Regional and national strategies be developed, incorporating culturally-appropriate evidence-based approaches to reduce alcohol consumption-related harm.
3. These strategies are supported by improved information systems and further scientific studies on the impact of alcohol and the effects of alcohol policies in the national and cultural contexts of the countries in the Americas.
4. A regional network of national counterparts, nominated by the Member States of the Americas, is established with the technical cooperation and support of the Pan American Health Organization, to work towards the reduction of alcohol consumption and related harms.
5. Alcohol policies whose effectiveness has been established by scientific research are implemented and evaluated in all countries of the Americas.
6. Priority areas of action need to include: heavy drinking occasions, overall alcohol consumption, women (including pregnant women), indigenous peoples, youth, other vulnerable populations, violence, intentional and unintentional injuries, underage drinking and alcohol use disorders.