

Klara Södra Kyrkogata 20
111 52 Stockholm, Sweden

T: +46 73 338 9397
info@movendi.ngo
www.movendi.ngo

OFFICIAL STATEMENT

RC73 AGENDA ITEM 9 (SEA/RC73/9):

SOUTH-EAST ASIA REGIONAL ACTION PLAN

TO IMPLEMENT THE GLOBAL ALCOHOL STRATEGY

21.08.2020

Movendi International and our 26 Member Organizations from 6 countries of the South-East Asian region welcome the progress report and congratulate the Regional Office for the WHO South-East Asian region and member states for important work done to prevent and reduce alcohol harm.

We note with concern the increasing trend of alcohol use in our region – driven by aggressive tactics of multinational alcohol industry giants.

- Policy gaps remain across our region, especially considering alcohol taxation and marketing – despite the fact that best practices are available from member states in South-East Asia and evidence-based policy solutions are at hand.
- Further weakening of alcohol policy models, especially through policy shifts allowing alcohol home delivery and online sales during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic are alarming as they have already led to increased alcohol use.

In a region that is under siege by the alcohol industry, where still the majority of the population lives free from alcohol use, but where consumption is rapidly rising and where alcohol harm is of epidemic proportions, rolling back successful and proven alcohol prevention and control measures jeopardizes to a large extent the gains achieved in alcohol control in recent years and threatens to put NCDs and SDGs targets out of reach.

Local people and communities want their children and families to be protected from Big Alcohol. Children and youth want to live in healthy, safe and enabling communities. People want to live and work in thriving societies. They reject Big Alcohol and they request urgent and priority action to tackle pervasive alcohol harm. In this spirit, Movendi International and all our members in the South-East Asian region fully support the regional initiative to prevent under-age alcohol consumption

Klara Södra Kyrkogata 20
111 52 Stockholm, Sweden

T: +46 73 338 9397
info@movendi.ngo
www.movendi.ngo

and initiation. Children and youth have a right to grow up free from alcohol and other drugs.

We have long called for a global initiative to advance alcohol taxation and we urge the South-East Asian region to take the lead in advancing evidence-based, public health-oriented alcohol taxation regimes.

Our region is particularly affected by trade and investment agreements that benefit the alcohol industry but undermine the Human Right to health. Alcohol remains the only psychoactive and dependence-producing substance with a significant impact on population health that is not controlled at the international level by legally binding regulatory instruments. We call on governments to pursue a regional initiative in South-East Asia for a legally binding international instrument for implementing effective alcohol control policies.

We work to empower and ensure community ownership and engagement in the response to alcohol harm in order to foster inclusive development. We are ready to share our expertise with WHO in South-East Asia and member states to this end.

We remain ready to increase our support for and partnership with governments and WHO country offices across the region to tackle alcohol harm as key strategy to achieve health and development for all.

--- END