The Forty-second World Health Assembly,

Having reviewed the background document 1 and report2 on the Technical Discussions held during the Forty-second World Health Assembly, on the health of youth;

Recognizing that the health of youth constitutes a critical element for the health of future generations and for health development in general, and that both the current and future health of young people depend very much on their own actions, choices and behaviour;

Aware of the extent of the health problems of youth - such as accidental injuries, nutritional imbalances, sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy before biological or social maturity, the abuse of substances including tobacco, alcohol and other drugs, and psychosocial difficulties - and of the need for healthy development among young people in both developed and developing countries;

Concerned at the high rate of unemployment among young people, in many Member States, and at its consequences for their health and integration into society;

Noting that, although the promotion of young people's health requires action in many quarters, the role of the health sector is central in the mobilization of efforts to meet the health needs of adolescents and youth and to encourage the contribution of young people to the goal of health for all;

Recognizing the critical role of nongovernmental organizations, particularly those for and of youth, and the innovative approaches that many of these organizations have already generated;

Recalling resolutions WHA27.28, WHA29.55, WHA31.57, WHA32.40, WHA33.35, WHA37.23 and WHA38.22;

1. URGES Member States:

(1) to give appropriate priority to the health needs of adolescents and youth;

(2) to provide the resources and facilities necessary to assess critically the health situation and needs of adolescents and youth, and identify major factors that may influence their current and future health, including policies and programmes in health and other sectors;

(3) to develop socially and culturally acceptable programmes and services to meet the health and development needs of all adolescents and youth, ensuring the involvement of families, the public at large, health and other relevant sectors, and young people themselves;

(4) to identify, and provide support to meet, the health and development requirements of those groups of young people who are particularly vulnerable, disadvantaged, or have special needs, such as those within minority sub-cultures, the disabled or the marginalized; such action should not be taken in isolation but, to the extent possible, as an integral part of programmes benefiting other young people;

(5) to train workers from the health and other sectors to appreciate the developmental basis of the health of youth, to be responsive and sensitive to the health needs and perspectives of young people, and to have the necessary communication skills for dealing with them;

(6) to collaborate closely with nongovernmental organizations, particularly youth organizations, in the development, implementation and evaluation of programmes to meet the health needs of youth, and to involve them in the national strategies for health for all;

(7) to draw the attention of those working in the health and other sectors, and the general public, to the action required to meet the health needs of youth and to the important contribution of young people to health for all through different forums, the media, and events such as national conferences and national youth days;
2. REQUESTS the Director-General:

(1) to support Member States in developing and implementing national multisectoral policies and programmes promoting the health of youth, in defining the health needs of young people and strengthening research, training, and services to meet those needs;

(2) to develop further and adapt methodologies and innovative approaches in the promotion of the health of youth, and to develop indicators for the evaluation of the health of youth and the experiences of countries, agencies and organizations in meeting the health needs of young people;

(3) to take the necessary steps to strengthen WHO's programmes at all levels dealing with adolescents and youth, including networks of collaborating institutions and centres for adolescent health, training in such areas as counselling and communication skills, and research;

(4) to mobilize additional financial and human resources in order to strengthen WHO's capacity to respond, on request, to the health needs of Member States in this area;

(5) to extend WHO's collaboration within the United Nations system, and with bilateral and nongovernmental organizations, to meet the health needs of young people and to facilitate their participation in the health-for-all movement;

(6) to report to future Health Assemblies on the progress made regarding the health of youth.