

## **Caribbean Breweries Association views on the magnitude of health problems related to alcohol consumption:**

The CBA is a non-profit trade organisation representing fifteen member breweries in 14 Caribbean countries.

The CBA and its constituent breweries are committed to the prevention of alcohol misuse and therefore endorse the initiative by the WHO, Resolution WHA58.26 adopted in May 2005. We are gratified to note that the resolution expressly recognizes the critical role that the beverage alcohol industry can play in the formulation of alcohol policies and strategies to deal with the misuse of alcohol.

The CBA and its constituent breweries are encouraged by the inclusive approach now being pursued by PAHO, which corrects the earlier approach followed in the run-up to the conference on alcohol policies held in Brasilia in November 2005, which did not benefit from the participation of beverage alcohol representatives, contrary to sections 1.2 and 2.9 of Resolution WHA58.26.

The CBA and its constituent breweries are committed to engaging with PAHO and National Governments in developing policies and strategies to prevent the misuse of alcohol. We actively promote the responsible use of our products by mature segments of our respective population, and are involved in other methods of self regulation.

We recognize the reported health benefits of moderate alcohol consumption and the need for its inclusion in the deliberations on the formulation of prudent alcohol policy and strategies.

We recognize the important role the beverage alcohol industry plays in the social and economic development of the most countries and regions, not the least of which are the Caribbean Member States. The beverage alcohol industry in the Caribbean contributes significantly to employment creation and to national revenues in the form of taxes and duties.

The CBA and its constituent breweries recognize that the issues, which relate to the misuse of alcohol, are as varied (country to country) as they are complex (social, cultural & economical) in nature. Developing adequate response mechanism and strategies must engage the priority attention of national governments and inter-government organizations in partnership with the private sector, non-governmental organizations and the scientific and public health communities.

## **Caribbean Breweries Association views on effective interventions to reduce health problems related to alcohol consumption**

The CBA and its constituent breweries share the view that effective approaches to the issue of harmful use of alcohol should be evidence based and like other consumables, considered in the context of population health, healthy lifestyle and social responsibility.

We support the view that policies aimed at addressing the harmful effects of alcohol misuse, should reflect a mix of ‘control of consumption’ particularly amongst minors, and ‘harm reduction’ based on sound evidence and research such as drinking patterns and binge drinking, among others. The CBA notes that past policies that relied on the relationships between per capita consumption and the incidence of alcohol related problems focused largely on the subjects of access and availability and only to a limited extent on the core issue of reducing the harmful effects of alcohol misuse. The latter approach recognizes that responsible drinking has a place in society and focuses on harm reduction.

Research on drinking patterns would need to be population specific and this would better inform approaches to alcohol policy at the national level. The information from this research can be leveraged to develop targeted interventions to encourage responsible drinking patterns and discourage misuse and irresponsible behavior.

We encourage a partnership approach that includes stakeholders directly engaged in the preventing the abuse of alcohol and its related harmful effects, including stakeholders whose responsibilities extend to public health and healthy living.

We support self-regulation based on a set of agreed principles and industry codes of practice, including industry conduct in advertising and promotion.

The CBA and its constituent breweries do not support attempts to exclude beverage alcohol from cross border trade, or to impose other stringent fiscal measures for the reasons that they have been proven to be ineffective, and that they could drive activity into the illegal and illicit sector which does not practice self regulation.

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