



WHO Resolution 61.4 on Strategies to Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol

The CBA:

- is a non-profit trade organisation comprising member breweries in fourteen (14) Caribbean countries.
- Recognize the important role the beverage alcohol industry plays in the social, economic, trade and development context of Caribbean Member States. The Caribbean beverage alcohol industry also contributes to significant linkages with other sectors such as agriculture, tourism and hospitality, processing and intermediate manufacturing, and continues to be a major contributor to employment, income and tax revenues.
- Acknowledges that the responsible consumption of beverage alcohol by persons of legal drinking age is an important aspect of Caribbean culture; contributing positively to healthy lifestyles, social interaction and cohesion.
- Acknowledges too, that irresponsible consumption of alcohol beverages and consumption by person under the legal drinking age, and other “at risk groups” such as pregnant women, can and do impose negative personal, social and economic consequences, including consequences to individuals not engaged in such irresponsible, illegal or high risk conduct.
- is committed to responsible conduct by it’s Membership; pursuant to it’s desire to provide persons of legal drinking age, high quality beverage alcohol products which satisfy the highest food, health and safety standards, at affordable prices.
- is totally opposed to the irresponsible consumption of beverage alcohol products, and consumption by minors and “at risk” and vulnerable groups.

Recognizes that irresponsible consumption, consumption by persons under the legal drinking age and consumption by vulnerable, “high risk” and “at risk” groups, impose negative social, economic and personal costs.

- Endorses Resolution 61.4 on Strategies to Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol, approved May 2008, which we believe can be the basis for a constructive, inclusive global strategy process, led by the WHO Secretariat and its constituent and approved by Member States.
- The CBA and the Member States of the Caribbean throughout the process leading up to the adoption of Resolution 61.4, have emphasized that harmful alcohol use occurs in complex, diverse environments, and therefore effective,



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sustainable approaches will require tailored, multi-disciplinary, multi-stakeholder policies and programs with roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders, including economic operators.

- The CBA therefore endorses that a “global strategy with a menu of options” (to be further tailored according to the regional, national, cultural and other context of Member States), constitutes the most effective means of addressing the complex and diverse challenges which emanate from the harmful, illegal and irresponsible use of beverage alcohol products.
- In this context the CBA both applauds and declares its active support for the landmark “Port of Spain Declaration of Non Communicable Diseases, signed by the Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community in May 2007, and commit ourselves to working in this framework which complements the ongoing actions within the WHO Framework of Resolution 61.4.
- Both the WHO Resolution 61.4 and the Port of Spain Declaration on NCD’s, endorsed by Heads of Government at the regional/CARICOM level, recognizes:
 - the critical role of the beverage alcohol industry, (as a key economic operator and/or private sector participant), and of non-government stakeholders in the process of developing strategies and interventions at the global, regional and national levels: and,
 - that such effective approaches must take into account the differences in regional and national contexts
- The CBA is of the considered perspective 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.
- The CBA supports the view that policies aimed at addressing the harmful effects of alcohol use, should reflect a balanced menu of overarching themes, to include “**reasonable regulation**”, which encompass, carefully crafted, and effective enforcement of “***drink drive policies, partnership programmes and campaigns***”, ‘controlling consumption access’ particularly amongst individuals below the “legal drinking age” and pregnant women; ‘harm reduction’ centered on “**evidence-based policies and interventions**”, founded on scientifically-based research into drinking patterns; and “**industry self regulation**”, with a particular



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focus on the development of a marketing, advertising and promotion Codes of Conduct, as well as other areas of corporate social responsibility.

- Effective strategies and intervention programmes within the framework of the Global Strategy should take cognizance of the following:
 - Over half of the alcohol consumed worldwide comes from the informal or illicit sector. While this is not a significant problem with the majority of Caribbean countries, in some countries a positive correlation exist between the price effect and the illegal production of beverage alcohol products.
 - Commercial, legal beverage alcohol products generate revenue available for public health; within the Caribbean, discussions are at varying stages of maturation about joint (economic operator/public sector) funding for various types of education campaigns targeting abstinence among “underage” and at risk groups, and responsible behavior, including the provision of *seed* funding to “drink-drive” campaigns.
 - Price measures by themselves do not work - there is good evidence that broad price increases have little impact on harmful use itself, as consumption patterns by groups engaged in harmful use is complex. What is required is a broader understanding of the context in which this consumption occurs and comprehensive approaches to implement them.
 - Excessive regulation, while seemingly attractive, can have unintended consequences (e.g. driving domestic consumers to seek smuggled goods), imposes costs on responsible consumers and legitimate economic activities and actors, can be difficult/costly to implement and enforce, and may not necessarily reduce harmful use;
 - Interventions which target harmful use (e.g. drink driving, server training to combat intoxication) can be effective when well-designed and implemented.
- The CBA has been working to reduce the harmful use of alcohol and is eager to continue engaging the WHO, Regional Organizations, and Member States to design and implement effective, evidence-based approaches and strategies.
- The CBA recognizes the opportunity to work with the global health community and others, and is prepared to actively cooperate in realizing new opportunities to do more to mitigate the harmful use of alcohol.
- The regional beverage alcohol industry possess important information, expertise and experience such as: on markets and marketing; drink driving, prevention of excessive



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consumption among youth, as well as in effective public awareness programs which can assist in the design of effective strategies and interventions.

October 30, 2008