

Statement to be made under Technical and Health Matters
Agenda Item 13.1: Prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases

Statement by the World Heart Federation, speaking on behalf of the International Diabetes Federation, the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease, the Union for International Cancer Control and (X number) of leading civil society organizations

Thank you for the opportunity to deliver this statement on behalf of the World Heart Federation, the NCD Alliance, and (X number) of leading civil society organizations.

We commend Member States on their action toward fulfilling commitments in the Political Declaration on the Prevention and Control of NCDs, unanimously adopted at the UN High Level Meeting in September 2011. Halting the NCD epidemic requires timely implementation of these commitments, including taking clear decisions at the 65th World Health Assembly.

For too long, NCDs have been a hidden epidemic. NCDs cause preventable suffering, disability and death in people of all ages in all countries, and on a massive scale. If I were to ask everyone in this room who has been affected by NCDs to stand up, the true impact of these diseases would come to light in a way that no statistic could adequately convey. Bold action at this World Health Assembly will enable us to significantly lessen this impact, help control the risk factors that accelerate the disease burden, and improve the overall social conditions toward good health for all.

Ladies and gentlemen, our organizations commit to supporting Member States and WHO in catalyzing global action for NCDs. We call on Member States to:

One: Support a comprehensive Global Monitoring Framework and Targets

We fully agree with the current global targets being considered by Member States, but they are incomplete – five targets is not enough for the most complex health challenge the world has ever faced. We ask Member States to agree to ten targets, and to report every two years on these targets. In particular, we need a target on essential medicines for persons living and coping with NCDs, to ensure 80% availability of affordable, quality-assured essential NCD medicines and technologies. This target should be added to those already proposed on tobacco, salt, alcohol, physical inactivity, trans-fats, blood pressure, obesity and multi-drug therapy.

Two: Support the establishment of a Global Coordinating Platform on NCDs

Led by Member States, UN agencies, civil society and the private sector, this platform would facilitate a renewed multisectoral movement for NCDs. It should have the responsibility to fully develop a global plan for NCDs and bring together key sectors and partners. We will not turn the tide on NCDs by continuing the same fragmented and piecemeal responses from the past – it's time to work together in a renewed global effort.

Three: Put NCDs at the heart of the post-2015 development agenda

As the world begins to review the impact of the Millennium Development Goals and plan for a new framework after their expiry in 2015, we have a unique opportunity to ensure that tackling NCDs, an issue omitted from the MDGs, is central to future health and development planning. We call on governments to ensure health and NCDs are included in the outcomes of Rio+20 and other current and future processes underway to determine the post-2015 Development framework.

The UN Summit last September put NCDs on the global agenda. Together, let us build on that opportunity with bold and immediate action. With strong leadership from the WHO and its Member States, with the support of the UN system, civil society, and other stakeholders, we can make significant progress in curtailing this epidemic.