

NCD Alliance Presidents Make a Joint Call To Action in The Lancet

In a comment linked to the newly launched Lancet 3rd Series on Chronic Diseases and Development, federations representing the four priority chronic diseases (cancer, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease, and diabetes) say that "If governments and aid agencies continue to ignore this threat, we will sleepwalk into a future in which healthy people will be in a minority, obese and unhealthy children die before their parents, and economic development and already vulnerable health systems are overwhelmed.

Non-communicable diseases have no borders or boundaries-they are the world's number one killer and devastate the bottom billion and G20 countries alike." Jean Claude Mbanya (President, International Diabetes Federation), S B Squire (President, International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease) Eduardo Cazap (President, Union for International Cancer Control, and Pekka Puska (President, World Heart Federation), have combined their federations to form the Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) Alliance.

They call in their Comment for ratification and full implementation by governments of WHO's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and effective actions on diet, physical activity, risks and their determinants related to non-communicable diseases, and action from global to local levels on the prevention of these diseases. Referring to the UN High Level Summit on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) scheduled for September, 2011, the four presidents conclude: "We will have only one chance to dialogue with the world's leaders and heads of state on non-communicable diseases in September, 2011. We have the arguments, evidence, and solutions, further strengthened by determination and political will. For us, the High-level Meeting is an unprecedented opportunity."

A second comment linked to the Series is by Lancet Editor Dr Richard Horton and Series 'guru' Professor Robert Beaglehole. This Comment provides an overview of the Series and highlights the optimism that the 2011 UN meeting has and will continue to engender. Professor Beaglehole and Dr Horton say: "Billed as a once in a generation opportunity to put chronic diseases on global and national agendas, the UN meeting could achieve what this year's Millennium Development Goal Summit achieved-the launch of coherent strategies for action, securing broad political commitment, winning pledges of financing, and providing a stage for powerful international advocacy.

The Series of papers we launch today is our contribution to preparations for the September meeting." They conclude: "Despite the plethora of WHO resolutions on the topic-the first over 50 years ago-action at the national level in most low-income and middle-income countries is far from adequate. The good news is that the UN High-level Meeting next September has the potential to stimulate action globally as well as nationally. Our measure of success for this Series will be a central place for chronic disease prevention in the global development agenda during the coming year and beyond." Source: Medical News Today (<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/207157.php> [1])

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