

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Important global commitment on tobacco control needs quick, concrete follow-up**

WASHINGTON, Sep 19 – Global leaders should be congratulated for committing to stronger tobacco control, the Framework Convention Alliance (FCA) said Monday.

“We are very encouraged that the Political Declaration agreed today at the UN High-level Meeting on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) commits governments to accelerated implementation of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC),” said Laurent Huber, FCA executive director. “This is recognition at the highest political level that the Convention needs more resources and stronger political will to be fully effective.”

“Our role now will be to support FCTC Parties to quickly transform their Summit promises into action on the ground in order to curb the tobacco epidemic,” Huber added.

The Political Declaration of the Meeting (the NCD Summit), which closes Tuesday, highlights the role played by tobacco use as a major risk factor for NCDs, which are responsible for nearly two-thirds of annual deaths, a growing number of them in the developing world.

The Declaration also commits governments to accelerate implementation of the World Health Organization FCTC, the global tobacco treaty that includes a wide range of measures to end tobacco use. The document also encouraged other member states to become Parties to the FCTC. The treaty now has 174 parties.

In addition, the Summit’s final document stressed the importance of one FCTC measure in particular – tobacco taxation – as “an effective and important means of reducing tobacco consumption”.

FCA pointed out that despite its recognition of the important role of tobacco control, the Political Declaration falls short on action to tackle NCDs. If current efforts are not intensified, the four main NCDs will cause economic losses to low and middle-income countries of nearly \$500 billion yearly in 2011-2025 (an average of \$25 per person a year in low-income countries, \$50 in lower middle-income countries and \$139 in upper middle-income countries), according to the World Economic Forum.

In contrast, putting in place a series of prevention and treatment ‘best-buy’ measures, including tobacco control, is predicted by the WHO to cost \$11.4 billion annually (from under \$1 in low-income countries to \$3 in upper middle-income countries).

However, UN member states in the Declaration failed to agree on an overall target for reducing NCDs deaths, and delayed until 2012 the setting of goals for measures like reducing the use of tobacco and salt. FCA noted it will be important to involve NGOs in the process of developing indicators and targets as they provide a useful safeguard against



attempts at interference by the tobacco industry, a way to engage the broader population, and a source of expertise and experience.

According to Huber, “Action to implement NCD control and prevention at the national level must be stepped up immediately and need not wait for the setting of global targets. In particular, FCTC measures have already been agreed, have a clear evidence base and are very good value for money.”

“Accelerated implementation of the FCTC can begin immediately,” he added.

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