



UN NCD SUMMIT OUTCOMES: *NOTES FOR TOBACCO CONTROL ADVOCATES*

The NCD Summit and its Political Declaration catapulted tobacco control onto the international development agenda and among the priorities of the United Nations (UN) system. This document highlights three main outcomes from the Summit: a/ general outcomes; b/ outcomes relevant for tobacco control advocacy and, c/ follow-up steps mandated by the Summit.

GENERAL OUTCOMES

1. Recognition of, and commitment to global action on non-communicable diseases (NCDs)

The four main NCDs (cancer, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases and cardiovascular disease) and their four common risk factors (tobacco use, the harmful use of alcohol, unhealthy diets and physical inactivity) were the subject of two days of discussion at the UN General Assembly. High-level officials from many countries made strong statements and commitments. The Summit's Political Declaration is the strongest call to action to date for governments to address the global NCD crisis.

2. Action needed on NCD risk factors, including tobacco use

During the NCD Summit, strong emphasis was placed on prevention as the "cornerstone" of the response to NCDs, through reducing exposure to risk factors and their determinants. A specific commitment was made to reduction of tobacco use, through accelerated implementation of the World Health Organisation Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, FCTC (see below).

3. A global development challenge

The Declaration acknowledges NCDs as one of the "major challenges for development in the 21st century", and a threat to existing international development goals, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

4. Political leadership critical to progress

In order to effectively prevent and control NCDs, it was agreed that governments should consider multi-sectoral approaches to health, including health-in-all-policies and whole-of-government approaches. Agreement was made that national, regional, provincial and local capacities must be strengthened.

5. Clear need for additional resources

The Declaration recognises that resources devoted to NCDs are not commensurate with the magnitude of the problem. Although no specific commitments were made by the international community as a whole to provide extra resources, the Declaration does specify the need to apply national resources, bilateral and multilateral funding channels, as well as the development of innovative long-term financing approaches.

6. The importance of development assistance

The Summit encouraged the inclusion of NCDs in development cooperation agendas and initiatives, and urges international organisations to provide technical assistance and capacity building on NCDs to developing countries.

7. Role of civil society

Government also recognised the contributions and important roles played by other relevant stakeholders, including civil society, academia, the media, and the private sector, where appropriate.

OUTCOMES FOR TOBACCO CONTROL

A UN Political Declaration is considered to be one of the most powerful tools within the UN system for promoting international cooperation and action. This UN Declaration therefore, provides an important tool for promoting tobacco control and FCTC implementation beyond the health sector, and for stimulating whole-of-government action to address tobacco use.

1. Commitment made to ACCELERATE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FCTC

The Declaration adopted by all Heads of state/government calls on all Parties to the FCTC to strengthen their efforts to comply with the treaty provisions in a timely manner. This provides a great leverage point for tobacco control advocates when talking to their government partners outside of Health ministries.

2. TOBACCO TAXATION highlighted

The specific reference in the Declaration to tobacco taxation as an effective strategy provides an exceptional opportunity to reach out to Ministries of Finance and others outside the health sector to stimulate national level action, particularly as we approach Working Group meetings on guidelines for FCTC Article 6 (Price and Tax measures) and COP5.

3. Countries that have not yet done so, encouraged to CONSIDER ACCEDING TO THE WHO FCTC

The UN Declaration provides yet another push to countries that still need it to become Parties to the FCTC.

4. FUNDAMENTAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST BETWEEN THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY AND PUBLIC HEALTH recognised.

The Declaration reinforces an unequivocal point in the FCTC – there is no room for the tobacco industry when developing solutions for the NCD epidemic. This reference should be highlighted particularly to those government (and other) partners who still believe the tobacco industry is a legitimate partner for public health discussions.

SUMMIT FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS

The NCD Declaration contains four major, time-bound follow-up actions for Member States, WHO and the UN Secretary-General. These provide further opportunities for tobacco control advocates to champion FCTC implementation.

1. National NCD Plans

The Declaration commits governments to establish or strengthen multi-sectoral National Policies and Plans on NCDs by 2013. **It is essential to ensure that FCTC implementation is highlighted in the National NCD Plans and that national tobacco control plans become a critical part of them.**

2. Goals and Targets

Led by WHO, Member States have until the end of 2012 to develop a comprehensive global monitoring framework for NCDs, including a set of indicators and voluntary global targets. It is expected that a draft list of targets will be reviewed by member states in January 2012 at the 130th WHO Executive Board (EB). The draft targets will most likely be tabled and discussed at the World Health Assembly (WHA) in May 2012. **Tobacco control policy target(s) should be promoted for inclusion among the broader NCD goals and targets. Strong advocacy ahead of the EB and WHA meetings in Geneva will be needed at the country and international levels.**

3. Report

The Declaration mandates the UN Secretary-General to report to the 68th session of the General Assembly (2013-14) on progress achieved in the implementation of commitments in the Declaration. **Governments should be encouraged to provide a clear overview of efforts to accelerate FCTC implementation in this report. FCTC implementation should be promoted as a “best buy” for achieving progress on NCDs.**

4. Review

A comprehensive review and assessment of progress achieved in the prevention and control of NCDs was agreed for 2014. **Tobacco control advocates should frame this 2014 Review date as a deadline for progress on accelerated FCTC implementation.**