

NCD Alliance unveils ground-breaking document for successful UN Summit on Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 22, 2011, GENEVA: Practical, achievable actions to turn the tide of a global epidemic of non-communicable diseases are today published by the NCD Alliance.

The actions are set out in a detailed document that represents the NCD Alliance's proposals for a successful UN High-Level Summit on NCDs to be held in New York this September.

Expert thinking and extensive experience in dealing with cancer, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease and diabetes have been brought together to develop 34 recommendations with the overall aim of reducing deaths by NCDs by two per cent a year.

Publication of the Proposed Outcomes Document is a significant milestone in preparing the world's leaders ahead of the Summit – only the second in the UN's history to be held on a health-related issue. The first one, held in 2001 on HIV/AIDS, is largely credited with garnering the political will and resources to turn around the AIDS crisis.

Ann Keeling, the Chairperson of the NCD Alliance, said: "This ground-breaking document is the beginning of an important dialogue which will help us convince political leaders to act to combat four diseases which together are the world's single biggest killer."

The Proposed Outcomes Document is the first of its kind and follows extensive consultation with experts drawn from the 900 member organisations and partners of the NCD Alliance.

"The NCD Alliance has shown over 2 years what can be achieved when organisations from different backgrounds and disciplines work together to find common ground and campaign for a cause they share" said Professor Eduardo Cazap, President of the Union for International Cancer Control.

The Document recommends wide-ranging action on NCDs, and ambitious goals and targets to measure progress.

"These four diseases are the leading causes of death in the world, yet receive less than 3 % of global health funding to low- and middle-income countries. The United Nations must assume a prominent leadership role to engage governments, civil society, the private sector, the health care community and the media to prevent millions of avoidable deaths" said Dr Bertie Squire, President of the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease.

The NCD Alliance is lobbying the UN General Assembly to adopt the recommendations in the Proposed Outcomes Document which is being targeted at Heads of State and Government who will meet in New York in September.

"A successful United Nations Summit will deliver an outcomes document with targets and objectives that reflect those we present today. That final document must tackle the fundamental risk factors which cause NCDs, oblige Member States to strengthen health systems and invest in NCDs, and put in place the capacity to deliver results" said Professor Sidney Smith, President of the World Heart Federation.

Professor Jean Claude Mbanya, President of the International Diabetes Federation, highlighted the Summit as a once-in-a-generation opportunity: “The UN NCD Summit must be a global game changer. It must change the lives of real people on the ground and reverse the trajectory of the NCD epidemic which threatens the future of mankind.

The NCD Alliance Proposed Outcomes Document identifies the actions needed to start that process. We stand ready to support those who share this vision.”

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¹ An alliance of four international federations (International Diabetes Federation, Union for International Cancer Control, International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease, World Heart Federation) representing the four main NCDs outlined in the World Health Organization’s 2008-2013 Action Plan for NCDs – cardiovascular disease, cancer , chronic respiratory disease and diabetes. These conditions share common risk factors (including tobacco use, physical inactivity and unhealthy diets) and also share common solutions, which provide a mutual platform for collaboration and joint advocacy. The NCD Alliance Partners are the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, Framework Convention Alliance, Global Health Council, LIVESTRONG, Norwegian Cancer Society and World Lung Foundation