

NCD Alliance Position Statement

New York, 10 August, 2011

The NCD Alliance, a global coalition of organizations from over 170 countries focusing on non-communicable diseases (NCDs), is gravely concerned that international progress on NCDs is at serious risk with recent efforts to postpone negotiations, while blocking accountability measures and time based targets in the UN Political Declaration on NCDs ahead of the September High-Level Meeting (HLM) on the prevention and control of NCDs.

Changes being proposed by United Nations Member States to the draft Political Declaration being finalized for the HLM will result in an ineffectual meeting lacking any concrete commitments and hindering the possibility of making any significant impact on the global NCD epidemic. Negotiations on the Declaration have been postponed until early September as a result of failure to reach a consensus in negotiations over the preceding weeks.

Of particular concern are the actions of the US, Canada and the European Union to block proposals by the Group of G77 (G77) for concrete targets and dates on the prevention and treatment of NCDs and for a global NCD partnership by 2012 to follow up on HLM commitments. Also of concern is the unwillingness by donor countries to call for increased resources for NCDs through domestic, bilateral and multilateral channels, and for the need for evidence-based fiscal policies such as increased taxation on tobacco. If these proposals are not adopted at the HLM taking place on 19-20 September 2011, the NCD Alliance believes the result will be an increase in new NCD cases and unnecessary death globally.

The time is now for Member States to move beyond rhetoric and vague pronouncements. If we don't have concrete commitments we undermine this historic opportunity to make a significant impact on the global NCD epidemic. As the NCD Alliance has previously said, if governments continue to ignore the threat of NCDs, 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.

The NCD Alliance expects member states to respect the right to health of the people they represent and will be issuing a letter to ambassadors and chairs of negotiations, asking them to intensify their efforts and urgently reach consensus on time-bound commitments to action. The Alliance will also make a media announcement on this position next week, stepping up the pressure on governments to ensure the HLM really is the turning point for NCDs.