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Coordination, programme and other questions: tobacco or health

Statement submitted by Union for International Cancer Control, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.



Statement

The activities of the high-level segment in 2013 come at a critical juncture for addressing the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases — cancer, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory diseases and diabetes — which together are responsible for more than two thirds of all global deaths.

In September 2011, the global community convened at Headquarters for a landmark high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases. A political declaration on non-communicable diseases was unanimously adopted. We are pleased to note the substantial progress that has been made since 2011 to fulfil the commitments made at the high-level meeting and in the Political Declaration and towards further recognition that non-communicable diseases are a global development issue.

Decisions taken at the recent session of the World Health Assembly, including the agreement on a global monitoring framework for non-communicable diseases and the endorsement of a global non-communicable diseases action plan for the period 2013-2020, represent major milestones since the high-level meeting. We now request that the Economic and Social Council use these outcomes as the basis for further integrating non-communicable disease prevention and control into its programme of work in order to continue to advance policies and actions that will improve lives.

To this end, we recommend that Member States consider and act on the following points:

(a) Support the establishment of a United Nations task force on non-communicable diseases within the Economic and Social Council and the work of that task force going forward. The task force will build on the efforts of the Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Task Force on Tobacco Control and provide a platform to coordinate and empower all relevant members of the United Nations system to address non-communicable diseases, a key commitment of the Political Declaration. It can act as the main vehicle for reporting on progress in the implementation of the Political Declaration to the General Assembly and ensure that non-communicable diseases are discussed in the context of economic and social development;

(b) Support the creation of a global coordination mechanism for non-communicable diseases, with a view to establishing a formal structure by the end of 2014. Fully addressing the non-communicable disease epidemic requires a response commensurate with the scale of the burden. Previous efforts to address non-communicable diseases are no longer sufficient;

(c) Integrate non-communicable diseases into the ongoing work of the Economic and Social Council on the post-2015 development agenda. The explicit inclusion of non-communicable diseases, including specific targets and health and non-communicable-disease-sensitive indicators across the future framework, will ensure that non-communicable diseases receive the necessary political attention and global development resources.

We express our thanks for your attention and continued commitment to preventing and controlling non-communicable diseases and assure you of our full support in ensuring that people around the world can achieve the healthy futures that they deserve.