



## **NGO Statement - WHO Europe Ministerial Conference on the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases in the Context of Health 2020**

Thank you for the opportunity to deliver this statement on behalf of the NCD Alliance, Framework Convention Alliance, European Association for the Study of Obesity, European Public Health Association, European Respiratory Society, Smoke Free Partnership, World Cancer Research Fund International, and the International Union Against TB and Lung Disease.

We would first like to commend WHO EURO Member States for their commitment to the prevention and control of NCDs. Europe is the region most affected by NCDs, so action is absolutely essential to reduce preventable mortality. The Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs (2012-2016) in September 2011 identified clear guiding principles, priority action areas and priority interventions for Europe. We also commend the placing of NCDs at the heart of the Health 2020 European Health Policy Framework. In light of this, Europe is in a strong position to deliver on global commitments made by Member States in the 2011 UN Political Declaration on the Prevention and Control of NCDs, the Global Monitoring Framework on NCDs, and the Global NCD Action Plan 2013-2020.

Today, we take this opportunity to recommend five areas that will help support the implementation of the Ashgabat Declaration by WHO EURO Member States:

**One: Prioritise and invest in NCDs at the national level.** Investment in NCDs now will secure high health, social and economic returns for generations to come. Only through strengthening and adequately investing in the national response will the agreed Health 2020 goals and NCD 2025 targets be achieved. There is a clear set of priority actions outlined in regional and global strategies to address common risk factors and strengthen the health-system response. WHO EURO should provide guidance and support to Member States to design and implement these policies, with a focus on monitoring and evaluation to assess progress.

**Two: Marshall a whole-of government and whole-of-society response to NCDs.** Government efforts to tackle NCDs will only have an impact when whole-of-government approaches are truly enacted, and all sectors of society are fully engaged. No one sector can solve this epidemic alone. We urge EURO Member states to forge collaborative multi-sectoral approaches at all levels of government, and also encourage them to harness the expertise, knowledge and resources of civil society.

**Three: Achieve a smoke free Europe by 2040.** Europe has the highest prevalence of smoking globally therefore we welcome the commitment to a smoke free Europe by 2040. The focus must be on measurable and achievable results with clear and ambitious commitments in achieving the voluntary global target of a 30% reduction in prevalence of current tobacco users. The Ashgabat Declaration is a step in the right direction yet we call on EURO Member States to fully support and accelerate the implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) to reduce the number of deaths caused by tobacco by 2040.

**Four: Champion health and NCDs in Post-2015.** The post-2015 development process is an unprecedented opportunity to define a global agenda that will start countries on the pathway to sustainable development. It is in all of our interests to ensure health is recognised as a global concern, and new health priorities such as NCDs and tobacco control are fully integrated. We urge EURO Member States to actively engage in the post-2015 process, ensure health is central to the agenda, and champion NCD-specific targets. We also call on EURO Member States to invest predictable and sustainable resources in country-level capacity for the NCD response, including through Official Development Assistance for NCDs in low- and middle-income countries.

**Five: Support a comprehensive UN Review and Assessment for NCDs in 2014.** Mandated by the UN Political Declaration, the September 2014 review will be an important political milestone to take stock and redouble efforts on NCDs. With negotiations on the modalities resolution for the Review commencing shortly, we urge EURO Member States to play a leading in role in the process, supporting a high-level review that results in an action-oriented political declaration.

Please be assured that our global network of civil society organisations stand ready to support the EURO Member States in translating commitments made in Ashgabat Declaration into action.