

WHO Director-General opens 140th session of the WHO Executive Board with a call to action on NCDs

Language English



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WHO Director General Margaret Chan has used her opening address at the 140th session of the WHO Executive Board to reiterate the importance of implementing economic policies to effectively reduce tobacco use, noting the [clarity of evidence](#) [1] to support action in the face of tobacco industry interference:

"...tobacco control makes good economic sense and does not harm economies. The evidence is abundant and compelling. It ought to put an end to one of the tobacco industry's most frequent and effective arguments.

Ministers of health are convinced by the evidence. I ask you to be vocal in persuading ministers of finance, trade, foreign affairs, and others not to be swayed by the tobacco industry's false claims".

Director General Chan called for courage when addressing the "powerful economic operators" which are key drivers of NCDs.

"Economic power readily translates into political power... If we fail to accept this responsibility, we will never make sufficient progress against lifestyle-related noncommunicable diseases."

In her speech, Director General Chan also:

- Emphasised the importance of addressing health inequalities and inequities, and how high medical costs exacerbate such inequalities, referencing the [World Economic Forum](#) [2] report which identified "rising wealth inequality as the most significant trend that will shape global development over the next ten years."
- Underscored the growing burden of NCDs citing [WHO AFRO](#) [3] "research documenting a steep rise in risk

factors for NCDs. For example, the prevalence of hypertension in the region is now the highest in the world, and 35% of the adult population is overweight".

- Celebrated new financing arrangements, with WHO and industry actors announcing collaboration to sustainably finance WHO's prequalification programmes *"making supplies more abundant and predictable, and prices more affordable."*
- Drew attention to the threat of air pollution to health: *"92% of the world's population lives in places where air pollution levels exceed WHO limits."*

Read Director General Chan's [address here](#) [4].

NCD Alliance's Advocacy Priorities

NCD Alliance has prepared a briefing note which provides background and key advocacy messages on the NCD Alliance's main priorities for the 140th WHO Executive Board (EB). The EB will nominate three candidates for the election of WHO Director-General at the 70th World Health Assembly, discuss the preparatory process for the 2018 UN High-Level Meeting on NCDs (2018 UN HLM on NCDs), and consider a number of NCD-related agenda items including the draft implementation plan on ending childhood obesity, the draft action plan on the public health response to dementia, a report and resolution on cancer prevention and control and the health of migrants.

For NCD Alliance's advocacy briefing and 2018 High Level Meeting Process priorities, see the links below.

Update: 25th January 2017

Initial screening of the six candidates nominated by Member States for the position of WHO Director General was conducted by the Executive Board, which subsequently voted to determine a short list of five candidates on Tuesday 24th January. On Wednesday, the Executive Board interviewed the remaining candidates, and further shortened the list to three nominees: Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (Ethiopia), Dr David Nabarro (UK) and Dr Sania Nishtar (Pakistan). All Member States will choose among these three final candidates by voting at the 70th World Health Assembly in May 2017, and the new Director-General will take office on 1 July.

NCDs and related priorities (ranging from the 2018 UN High-Level Meeting, specific NCDs including cancer and dementia, to chemicals, health of migrants, and the Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health) are yet to be discussed this week by the Executive Board, and a comprehensive update will be featured in next week's newsletter.

NCD Alliance's statements on NCD related priorities can be found below and in the [resources section](#) [5] of this website.

Post Date: Monday, 23 January, 2017

Category - News: Announcements

Related Resource: [NCD Alliance Advocacy Briefing for the 140th session of the WHO Executive Board](#) [6]

[Overview Document of NCD Alliance Process Priorities for the 2018 UN High-level Meeting on NCDs](#) [7]

[140th WHO EB: Agenda Item 8.7: Promoting the health of migrants - Statement](#) [8]

[140th WHO EB: Agenda Item 10.1: Preparation for the third High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of NCDs, to be held in 2018 - Joint statement on Appendix 3 in relation to unhealthy diets](#) [9]

[140th WHO EB: Agenda Item 10.1: Preparation for the third High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of NCDs, to be held in 2018 - Statement on Appendix 3 and Register of NSAs](#) [10]

[140th WHO EB: Agenda Item 10.1: Preparation for the third High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of NCDs, to be held in 2018 - Statement on preparation processes](#) [11]

[140th WHO EB Agenda Item 10.2: Draft global action plan on the public health response to dementia - Statement](#) [12]

[140th WHO EB Agenda Item 10.4: Implementation for the Report of the Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity - Statement](#) [13]

[140th WHO EB: Agenda Item 11.1: Progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development - Statement](#) [14]

[140th WHO EB: Agenda Item 11.2: Role of the health sector in the sound management of chemicals - Statement](#) [15]

[140th WHO EB Agenda Item 11.3: Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health \(2016-2030\): adolescents' health - Statement](#) [16]

Source URL: <https://old.ncdalliance.org/news-events/news/who-director-general-opens-140th-session-of-the-who-executive-board-with-a-call-to-action-on-ncds>

Links

- [1] <https://ncdalliance.org/news-events/news/new-report-the-economics-of-tobacco-and-tobacco-control>
- [2] http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Forum_IncGrwth_2017.pdf
- [3] <http://www.afro.who.int/en/media-centre/pressreleases/item/9285-research-shows-higher-risk-of-developing-non-communicable-diseases-in-africa.html>
- [4] <http://www.who.int/dg/speeches/2017/140-executive-board/en/>
- [5] https://ncdalliance.org/resources/statements-submissions-and-briefings?field_resource_type_value=who-executive-board-meetings&title_field_value=
- [6] <https://old.ncdalliance.org/resources/ncda-advocacy-briefing-for-the-140th-session-of-the-who-executive-board>
- [7] <https://old.ncdalliance.org/resources/overview-document-of-ncd-alliance-process-priorities-for-the-2018-un-high-level-meeting-on-ncds>
- [8] <https://old.ncdalliance.org/resources/140th-who-eb-agenda-item-87-promoting-the-health-of-migrants-statement>
- [9] <https://old.ncdalliance.org/resources/140th-who-eb-agenda-item-101-preparation-for-the-third-high-level-meeting-of-the-general-assembly-on-the-prevention-and-control-of-ncds-to-be-held-in-1>
- [10] <https://old.ncdalliance.org/resources/140th-who-eb-agenda-item-101-preparation-for-the-third-high-level-meeting-of-the-general-assembly-on-the-prevention-and-control-of-ncds-to-be-held-in-0>
- [11] <https://old.ncdalliance.org/resources/140th-who-eb-agenda-item-101-preparation-for-the-third-high-level-meeting-of-the-general-assembly-on-the-prevention-and-control-of-ncds-to-be-held-in>
- [12] <https://old.ncdalliance.org/resources/140th-who-eb-agenda-item-102-draft-global-action-plan-on-the-public-health-response-to-dementia-statement>
- [13] <https://old.ncdalliance.org/resources/140th-who-eb-agenda-item-104-implementation-for-the-report-of-the-commission-on-ending-childhood-obesity-statement>
- [14] <https://old.ncdalliance.org/resources/140th-who-eb-agenda-item-111-progress-in-the-implementation-of-the-2030-agenda-for-sustainable-development-statement>
- [15] <https://old.ncdalliance.org/resources/140th-who-eb-agenda-item-112-role-of-the-health-sector-in-the-sound-management-of-chemicals-statement>
- [16] <https://old.ncdalliance.org/resources/140th-who-eb-agenda-item-113-global-strategy-for-women%E2%80%99s-children%E2%80%99s-and-adolescents%E2%80%99-health-2016-2030-adolescents%E2%80%99-health-statement>