

Statement at 70th World Health Assembly

Agenda Item 16.2: Role of the health sector in the sound management of chemicals

Honourable chairperson, distinguished delegates,

Thank you for the opportunity to deliver this statement on behalf of the Union for International Cancer Control and supported by NCD Alliance. We congratulate the Secretariat on the consultative process to develop the draft road map, and commend the integrated references made to NCDs reflecting evidence that harmful exposure to chemicals, including via air pollution and occupational settings, is linked to multiple NCDs.

We call on WHO and Member States to:

- **Support the adoption of the roadmap** and ensure rapid implementation in collaboration with key stakeholders, including the sharing of good practice and implementation tools.
- **Engage civil society** in monitoring of progress made in the areas outlined in the roadmap. Civil society has unique and valuable competencies, not least in independent accountability, which will be valuable in ensuring progress and impact in all settings.
- **Invest in public awareness campaigns**, as suggested in the roadmap, recognising the power of community engagement to drive momentum to reduce the long-term burden of NCDs such as neurological disorders, diabetes and a number of cancers.
- **Exercise caution against industry interference at national level:** while recognising the role that the private sector can and should have in collaborative efforts on implementation, monitoring and evaluation of measures outlined in the road map, we point to past grave misconduct by some industry entities which includes manipulation of scientific literature and lobbying of officials against effective national regulation. We urge national governments to be wary of such activities and to implement appropriate regulatory barriers to prevent and routinely monitor against them.

We stand ready to support WHO and Member States in these endeavours.