



Statement at the 144th WHO Executive Board Meeting

## Agenda Item 5.6: Health, environment and climate change

*The greatest threat to our planet and its people is the belief that that someone else will save them.*

Thank you for the opportunity to deliver this statement by UICC, supported by NCDA. We highly commend the measures included in the draft strategy and action plan. In particular, we urge WHO and Member States to:

- **Respond to the tactics deployed by fossil fuel industries, which echo those used by the tobacco industry, including lobbying and manipulation of scientific literature:** Governments and the wider health community should build on valuable experience of the FCTC, particularly Article 5.3 which prohibits influence of the tobacco industry on health policy making, and draw on lessons learned to effectively regulate fossil fuel industries.
- **Implement fiscal policies to reduce the burden of health-harming pollution:** Appropriate pricing of polluting fuels would more than halve premature deaths from air pollution, reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20%, and generate tax revenues equivalent to >50% of government health spending globally.<sup>i</sup> In 2017, global fossil fuel consumption subsidies totalled >300 billion USD - fuelling death and disability with far higher economic consequences<sup>ii,iii</sup> Revenue from increased taxation and removal of subsidies can deliver a double dividend when reinvested in health promoting alternatives such as renewable energy, or in UHC.
- **Establish guidance for Health Impact Assessments (HIA) and present evidence for cost-effectiveness of co-benefit interventions:** HIA should be taken into account for decision making across key sectors, especially energy, agriculture, transport, housing, industry, urban planning and trade. Collect data on cost-effective co-benefit solutions for health promotion and climate change mitigation, to support the 'massive prevention effort' called for in the draft strategy.

These actions cannot wait. We stand ready to support finalisation and implementation of the global strategy and action plan.

[1971/2000 characters]

---

<sup>i</sup> [http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/EB142/B142\\_12-en.pdf](http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB142/B142_12-en.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.iea.org/weo/energysubsidies/>

<sup>iii</sup> [https://www.env-health.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/hidden\\_price\\_tags.pdf](https://www.env-health.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/hidden_price_tags.pdf)