

**Joint Statement on Agenda item 14: Accelerating the response to noncommunicable diseases in the African Region in line with the Political Declaration of the High Level Meeting of the General Assembly on the prevention and control of NCDs' ([AFR/RC69/10](#))**

Thank you for the opportunity to deliver this statement on behalf of the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC), the NCD Alliance (global), the Ghana NCD Alliance, NCD Alliance Nigeria, NCD Alliance Kenya, Uganda NCD Alliance, East Africa NCD Alliance, Zambia NCD Alliance, Cameroon Civil Society NCD Alliance, South Africa NCD Alliance, Burundi NCD Alliance, *Coalition MNT Togo*, *Coalition Nigérienne contre les MNT*, and West African Alcohol Policy Alliance.

We highly commend the increased prioritisation of NCDs at meetings of the WHO Regional Committee for Africa in recent years, and we congratulate Member States in the region who have already set national NCD targets and plans. This agenda item is particularly relevant considering the uneven and insufficient progress identified by the 2017 NCD Progress Monitor in scaling up NCD services, programmes and investments to prevent premature deaths in Africa.

As civil society organisations we wish to support Member States in making progress, recognising the significant challenges faced in accelerating action to tackle NCDs including weak health systems, limited national capacities, weak NCD surveillance, limited domestic and external financing, as well as the negative impact of economic and commercial factors. To scale up the NCD response, we call on Member States of this Regional Committee to:

- **Support the report's recommendations:** by prioritising the development and implementation of impactful policy actions, such as implementing national NCD multisectoral action plans; implementing regulatory measures and taxation to promote healthy diets and to reduce use of tobacco products, alcohol and sugar-sweetened beverages; implementing a prioritised set of cost-effective and affordable evidence-based NCD and mental health interventions including the WHO 'Best Buys'; and strengthening health systems through integration of NCD responses with communicable diseases, such as HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis.
- **Elevate the voices of people living with NCDs, young people, and marginalised populations:** The 2018 NCD HLM Political Declaration recognised the need for a people-centred approach on NCDs and to amplify voices of civil society and especially people living with NCDs (PLWNCDs). We call on Member States to undertake systematic actions to ensure the meaningful involvement of PLWNCDs, young people, and marginalised groups, such as women and indigenous peoples, throughout all stages of policy and programme development, implementation and evaluation.
- **Be wary of the undue influence of unhealthy commodity industries:** Member States ought to acknowledge that the private sector is not a homogenous group and therefore due consideration must be given to any real or perceived conflicts of interest. We therefore consider bilateral engagements with the alcohol and SSB sectors to be inappropriate and counterproductive.
- **Send top level representation to the UN High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage (UHC):** We urge Member States to ensure attendance at the highest level possible, and to support the progressive realisation of UHC through the integration of NCD prevention and control services in priority national UHC packages. UHC can become a powerful tool to accelerate progress on NCD outcomes, reducing inequalities and fostering socio-economic stability and sustainable development.

We stand ready to support Member States to accelerate the implementation of global and regional commitments on NCDs, and to build on the priorities adopted at the 2018 UN HLM on NCDs towards the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.