



**European Union**  
**Statement**

**WHO**

**154<sup>th</sup> Executive Board**

**(22-27 January 2024)**

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**Item 7 – Follow-up to the political declaration of the third high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases**

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**Geneva, 24 January 2024**

## WHO

### 154<sup>th</sup> Session of the Executive Board

#### **Item 7 – Follow-up to the political declaration of the third high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases**

#### **EU Statement**

Mr. Director General,

Mr. President,

This statement is made on behalf of the EU and its Member States.

The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Ukraine, Republic of Moldova<sup>1</sup> and Georgia, the EFTA country Norway, member of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

The EU is deeply affected by the major disease burden caused by NCDs and mental health conditions, and supports the work of WHO and Member States in the prevention and control hereof. We are concerned that the world is not on track to achieve the SDG target 3.4.

We welcome that mental health plays a significant role in the report. However, we call on the Secretariat to ensure stronger focus on mental health on the global health policy agenda.

Investments in NCDs and mental health are falling shorter than hoped for, even though investing in health promotion, disease prevention and treatment renders a great return of investment. We must accelerate our efforts and pay prime attention to NCDs and mental health in the GPW14.

Equitable and affordable access to essential health services, not least for persons who are in vulnerable situations and underserved, is necessary to meet the needs of people living with NCDs and mental health conditions.

Mitigating risks factors, such as overweight, inactivity, excess sugar intake, unhealthy diets; and among others, implementing alcohol control policies, restricting tobacco use and air pollution, are all vital steps to reduce morbidity and mortality associated with NCDs. In order to do this, a “health in all policies” approach is essential – for example regarding social, economic, commercial and environmental determinants – including to protect our health by reducing exposure to advertising of unhealthy and harmful products.

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<sup>1</sup> North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

Strengthened multisectoral action is needed to tackle the growing challenge of NCDs and mental health conditions, in particular in the context of a health and humanitarian crisis or war conflict. Emergencies increase rates of stress, anxiety, depression and disrupt mental health and NCD service delivery. We therefore welcome the draft resolution on mental health and psychosocial support in emergencies settings.

We recognise the need for further progress concerning the access to affordable oral health services. Therefore we support the Global strategy on oral health and the action plan to integrate oral health into universal health coverage.

Convinced that transplantation can help to decrease premature mortality associated with NCDs, we welcome the draft resolution on increasing availability, ethical access and oversight of transplantation of human cells, tissues and organs.

We hope for a strong engagement from WHO in the preparations of the UNGA High-Level Meeting on NCDs next year, in order to guarantee sufficient cross-sectoral engagement by governments and global stakeholders.

Thank you.