



## The UN Summit on Non-Communicable Diseases

### NCD Alliance FAQ

#### 1. AN INTRODUCTION

##### **What is a UN Summit?**

The UN General Assembly, the principal decision-making body of the UN which represent all UN member states, has decided to hold a UN Summit on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) in order to bring global attention to these diseases and agree on a plan of action to address them.

##### **What is the focus of the Summit?**

In May 2010, UN member states passed UN resolution 64/265, which states that the Summit will focus on the 'four most prominent non-communicable diseases, namely, cardiovascular diseases, cancers, chronic respiratory diseases and diabetes', and the 'common risk factors of tobacco use, alcohol abuse, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and environmental carcinogens.'

##### **Who is it being organised by?**

The UN Summit on NCDs (UNS) will be organized under the direction of the UN General Assembly, with the support of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The logistics will be organized by the UN Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM).

##### **When and where will it take place?**

The meeting will take place at UN Headquarters in New York. The dates and length are still to be determined, although the meeting is expected to take place within the period of 18-20 September 2011 before the opening of the main UN General Assembly Session on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2011.

##### **Is it a Summit or a High-Level Meeting?**

The official name for the meeting specified in UN Resolution 64/265 is a 'High-Level Meeting with the participation of Heads of State and Government.' Although this term is similar and nearly interchangeable with the term 'Summit', a Summit implies the attendance of Heads of State. Therefore, the NCD Alliance recommends usage of the term 'UN Summit on NCDs (UNS)' for referring to the meeting.

##### **Why is it important?**

The Summit is the biggest and best opportunity to put NCDs on the global agenda. It has the potential to secure commitment from Heads of Government for a coordinated global response to NCDs, substantially increase financial resources for NCDs and save millions from premature death and debilitating health complications. It also has the potential to lead to measurable targets and commitments from governments to take action on NCDs for which they can be monitored and held accountable through regular reporting.

### **What do we need to do to ensure the Summit is a turning point for NCDs?**

Ensuring that major change results from the UNS requires concerted effort by all sectors in the lead-up to the event in order to agree specific measurable outcomes and results. Civil society has a critical role to play in shaping the agenda and in delivering concrete outcomes in partnership with governments and communities.

## **2. HOW WAS IT DECIDED?**

### **When was the decision made to hold the Summit?**

On 13th May 2010, the UN General Assembly unanimously passed a resolution on the prevention and control of NCDs, calling for a UN Summit on NCDs to be held in September 2011. In total, 130 states cosponsored the resolution, signalling that the world has recognized the urgency and priority of addressing the growing threat posed by diabetes and other NCDs.

### **Who made the decision to hold a Summit?**

The Resolution calling for the UNS was proposed by the Caribbean Group of States (CARICOM), a grouping of 15 countries from the Caribbean. CARICOM secured support for the UNS over a period of several months leading up to the vote, which ensured the vote had unanimous support.

### **Who were the key parties involved in securing the Summit?**

In addition to UN member states, many other stakeholders played a key role in securing support for the UNS. The NCD Alliance, formed by the the International Diabetes Federation (IDF), International Union Against TB and Lung Disease (The Union), Union for International Cancer Control (UICC), and the World Heart Federation (WHF), have led the civil society campaign for a UNS since May 2009. The NCD Alliance's 880 member associations were instrumental in securing government support for the UNS - many members formed national coalitions to lobby their governments and influence key leaders.

## **3. WHAT ARE THE DETAILS?**

### **What is the format of the Summit?**

This will be decided in a modalities resolution which the UN General Assembly will agree on in late 2010 / early 2011. UN Ambassadors have informed us that the meeting will most likely have a main plenary session in which member states speak, in addition to several roundtables where member states, civil society and other stakeholders discuss different themes relating to NCDs.

### **Who will attend the meeting?**

The meeting will be attended by Heads of State, Ministers and other government representatives, civil society, the private sector, academia, and other stakeholders.

### **Who are the key member states driving preparations for the Summit?**

Luxemburg and Jamaica have been appointed as the meetings co-facilitators and will lead consultations with UN member states and oversee the process of drafting an outcomes document to be agreed by member states in the months leading up to the UN Summit. Switzerland, who is President of the UN General Assembly's current 65<sup>th</sup> Session until September 2011, will have a key role in UNS preparations. The President of the 66<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, who will assume office in September 2011, is also expected to have an important role, although key details and decisions concerning the UNS (including negotiation of the draft Outcomes Statement) will have been finalized before they take office.

CARICOM states will also be key influencers as the grouping that led the campaign for the UNS within the UN. In addition, Russia will hold a Ministerial Conference on NCDs in April 2011 and will be another key member state.

### **What is the role of the World Health Organization?**

The World Health Organization (WHO) is expected to support Member States, UN Regional Commissions, other UN Offices, Funds and Programmes, the World Bank and other relevant stakeholders in holding consultations as part of the preparatory process for the Summit. For further information on the role of the WHO, please refer to the information note WHO has produced for the UNS at [http://www.who.int/nmh/events/2011/ncd\\_summit/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/nmh/events/2011/ncd_summit/en/index.html).

## **4. WHAT ARE THE NCD ALLIANCE'S EXPECTATIONS FOR THE SUMMIT?**

The exact details of length, scope and outcomes of the UN Summit on NCDs will be decided by a Modalities Resolution which is expected to be put to the UN General Assembly at the end of 2010. The NCD Alliance is asking its Member Associations to lobby Governments to press for the following:

- **A 3 day summit** in order to maximize this opportunity, and provide adequate time for discussion and debate on the burden of NCDs and the action required to address it.
- **An Outcomes Statement** at the end of the UNS which will form a clear programme of action for governments, the UN system, civil society and other stakeholders.
- **Reporting mechanisms for member states** on that Outcome Statement so that progress can be benchmarked and measured.
- **Formal inclusion of NGOs** in the meeting and consultations leading up to it, including the establishment of a Civil Society Task Force under the office of the President of the UN General Assembly.

## **5. NCD ALLIANCE KEY 'ASKS' FROM THE SUMMIT**

The NCD Alliance's specific 'asks' from the UNS is an Outcome Statement which leads to the following outcomes:

1. Governments to be accountable and measured on NCD plans
2. Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) to be fully implemented
3. A global commitment to prevent the preventable
4. Globally agreed approaches to NCD treatment and care
5. Resources to deliver NCD interventions
6. NCDs in the MDG successor goals

## 6. WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

The NCD Alliance will drive forward five areas of work leading up to and following the UNS by:

1. Leading a civil society movement for NCDs
2. Producing evidence based arguments to support the NCD cause
3. Acting as the global voice of our members and people with NCDs
4. Creating a Global Plan for NCDs and sharing innovative solutions and best practices
5. Working with NGOs, governments and businesses to take forward NCD Alliance key 'asks' for and from the Summit

## 7. WHERE CAN I FIND FURTHER INFORMATION?

- Regular updates will be posted on the NCD Alliance website at [www.ncdalliance.org](http://www.ncdalliance.org).
- Further information on the work of the NCD Alliance and our plans for the UNS can be found in **'The NCD Alliance Plan for the United Nations Summit on Non-Communicable Diseases'** (available on the NCD Alliance website).
- Interested NGOs are invited to join the NCD Alliance Common Interest Group which will provide regular updates on the UN Summit and hold teleconferences briefings. Please e-mail [info@ncdalliance.org](mailto:info@ncdalliance.org) if you are interest in joining this group.