



High-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly to undertake a comprehensive review and assessment of the progress achieved in the prevention and control of NCDs (10-11 July 2014, New York)

Questions and Answers

(Updated on 3 June 2014)

Q1: What will be discussed during the Review?

The theme of the high-level meeting is “Taking stock of progress in implementing the Political Declaration on the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases and scaling up of multi-stakeholder and national multi-sectoral responses to the prevention and control of NCDs including in the context of the post-2015 development agenda”. This second high-level meeting will build on the first meeting held in September 2011. It will take stock of the progress made since Heads of State and Government adopted the UN Political Declaration on NCDs and committed themselves to develop national plans to prevent and control NCDs. Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Health and Planning will be invited to identify remaining gaps which can be addressed during the next 3-4 years and reaffirm their political commitment.

Q2: Why is the United Nations tackling the issue of NCDs at the highest level?

Non-communicable diseases are the number one killer in the world with over 63% of all deaths attributed to cardiovascular diseases (like heart attacks and strokes), cancers, respiratory diseases, and diabetes. Each year, 14 million deaths from NCDs occur between the ages of 30 and 70. The vast majority of these premature deaths of individuals from NCDs occur in developing countries (85 per cent or 11.8 million) and most of these premature deaths can be prevented. There is growing international awareness that premature deaths from NCDs reduce productivity, curtail economic growth and development, and pose significant social challenges in most countries, in particular developing countries. There are affordable and simple solutions to prevent and control NCDs. They can help turn the tide against premature deaths from NCDs. To underscore the need for concerted action and a coordinated global response to address the health and development challenges posed by NCDs, the UN General Assembly decided to convene the first high-level meeting in September 2011. The second meeting in July 2014 will assess progress made so far and identify remaining gaps.

Q3: What will happen at the second high-level meeting on NCDs and what is expected from it?

The meeting will be held with the participation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Health and Planning. The President of the 68th session of the General Assembly will chair the opening and closing sessions. The meeting will be composed of two plenary sessions on 10 July and two thematic roundtable sessions on 11 July, as well as a number of side events:

- The **plenary sessions** will give Ministers a platform to take stock of the progress made in implementing the commitments in the 2011 Political Declaration on NCDs, identify and address gaps and reaffirm their political commitment in response to the challenge of NCDs.



- The **round table sessions** are aimed at fostering exchanges of experiences on capacity building, whole-of-government responses, partnerships and international cooperation. The round tables will be co-chaired at the ministerial level and participation will include Member States, observers, representatives of UN agencies, civil society and NGOs, private sector and academia. A concept note for the round table discussions is available at www.who.int/ncd
- **Side events** will be organized to debate issues on how to address NCDs as one of the major challenges for development in the twenty-first century.
- During the **closing session**, Member States are expected to adopt a concise, focused and action-oriented outcome document that will shape the national and international agendas on NCDs, as well as contribute to the issue of global health in the post-2015 development agenda.

Q3: How will Member States get to know what is happening during the negotiations?

The intergovernmental negotiations on the outcome document are currently taking place in New York under the co-facilitation of the Ambassadors of Belgium and Jamaica. The dates and venue are published in the UN Journal available at www.un.org/en/documents/journal.asp. Representatives from Permanent Missions in New York are encouraged to participate in the negotiations and keep their capitals informed of progress made. To keep representatives from Permanent Missions in Geneva informed, WHO is convening weekly (virtual) information sessions (by telephone).

Q4: Will Member States be invited to the high-level meeting?

The President of the General Assembly has transmitted a letter dated 23 June 2014 to Member States recalling the adoption of resolution A/RES/68/271 on the convening of the high-level meeting and encouraging participation at the highest possible level. The letter along with a copy of the proposed organizational arrangements for the high-level meeting are available on the President's website at the following address: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/president/68/letters/>. Further, a number of WHO Regional Offices have dispatched copies of the resolution to Ministers of Health to encourage their participation in the high-level meeting.

Q5: Will there be funding available for attendance of the high-level meeting?

No. Similar to 2011, the United Nations does not provide financial support to attend meetings in New York.

Q6: Why are Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Planning being invited? How is the high-level meeting going to benefit them?

As stated by the WHO Director-General, "the globalization of unhealthy lifestyles is by no means just a technical issue for public health. It is a whole of government issue. It is a political issue. It is a trade issue. And it is an issue for foreign affairs".

Q7: Is there a deadline for registration? [this should be addressed only for CSOs. There is no need to inform MS on how they should register as there is no registration process for Member States] Suggest deletion



Q8: How can a country get a specific issue into the outcome document?

As per question 3, representatives from Member States are encouraged to participate in the negotiations which are currently taking place in New York.

Q9: Where can I find more information about the high-level meeting and side events?

Information on the high-level meeting and side events is available at www.who.int/ncd.

Q10: What is WHO's role in the NCD Review 2014?

WHO is the lead UN agency on health and has therefore been spearheading the efforts to raise the priority given to NCDs on national and international agendas. Member States have recognized the leading role of WHO as the primary specialized agency for health, and reaffirmed the leadership role of WHO in promoting global action against NCDs. To this end, WHO is expected to play an instrumental role in operationalizing the commitments that will result from the Review.

Q11. Where can I find information about noncommunicable diseases?

WHO fact sheet on NCDs:

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs355/en/>

WHO fact sheet on tobacco:

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs339/en/>

WHO fact sheet on alcohol:

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs349/en/>

WHO fact sheet on physical activity:

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs385/en/>

WHO fact sheet on obesity and overweight:

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs311/en/>

WHO fact sheet on cardiovascular diseases:

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs317/en/>

WHO fact sheet on cancer:

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs297/en/>

WHO fact sheet on diabetes:

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs312/en/>

WHO fact sheet on asthma:

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs307/en/>



Q12. Where do I find information about what is being done to address NCDs?

2011 UN Political Declaration on NCDs:

http://www.who.int/nmh/events/un_ncd_summit2011/en/

Report on progress achieved since 2011:

<http://www.who.int/nmh/events/2014/UN-general-assembly/en/>

WHO updates on the preparatory process leading towards the Review in July 2014:

<http://www.who.int/nmh/events/2014/high-level-unga/en/>

Q13. Where do I find more information about the Review in July 2014?

Overview brochure:

<http://www.who.int/nmh/events/2014/unga-review.pdf?ua=1>

WHO website:

<http://www.who.int/nmh/events/2014/high-level-unga/en/>

Website of the UN General Assembly:

http://www.un.org/en/ga/president/68/events/hlm_ncd.shtml

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