

UICC applauds the United Nations for recognising scale of the global cancer epidemic during historic summit

Nevertheless, member states' commitments fall short

GENEVA, Switzerland, 19 September 2011 – Every month 600,000 people die of cancer, which with the right strategies, could otherwise be prevented or treated.

In response to this situation and the epidemic of other non-communicable diseases (NCDs), the United Nations (UN) authorised a High-Level Meeting (HLM) to address the prevention and control of these diseases. The outcomes document generated by the HLM - known as a Political Declaration - is only the second of its kind to address a health issue on a global scale, the first being the outcomes document from the 2001 UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS.

UICC, on behalf of its member organisations, strongly supports the call for global plans for the prevention and control of NCDs, and welcomes cancer specific commitments to:

- ∞ Give greater priority to early detection, screening and diagnosis of NCDs including cancer screening programmes (particularly breast and cervical cancer)
- ∞ Increase access to Hepatitis B and HPV vaccines as part of national immunisation programmes to prevent infection-related cancers.

“Whilst specific targets to reduce deaths from NCDs may not have been achieved at the HLM, there is much to be encouraged by”, commented Cary Adams, CEO of the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC). “More work is now needed to convince governments to commit to reducing avoidable deaths from NCDs by 25% by 2025 - a target that the World Health Organization (WHO) believes is achievable.”

Now that the direction of the UN Political Declaration is known, UICC is committed to working with Governments, WHO, UN Agencies, civil society and other stakeholders to implement the Declaration's commitments. UICC will continue to advocate for additional measures to ensure the global cancer burden is reduced.

The Political Declaration of the UN High-Level Meeting on NCDs is now an important campaigning tool for the global cancer community. UICC will use it to scale-up its advocacy campaign and support its member organisations to lobby governments to meet and implement commitments to reduce the overall impact of the global cancer burden.

“The process of addressing NCDs globally has been set in motion in the most powerful way, said Mr Adams “UICC is serious about holding the UN and the world's governments' accountable”.

UICC and its members will begin the next phase of their advocacy campaign at the World Cancer Leaders' Summit in Dublin in November where a response to the UN HLM will be outlined in detail.

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Notes to editors

Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) has been working to achieve its primary objective of securing an outcomes document from the UN HLM which supports the long term delivery of the 11 targets contained in the World Cancer Declaration.

Additionally, as a founding member of the NCD Alliance, UICC has been at the forefront of the civil society campaign to put NCDs on the global political agenda.

About UICC

UICC is a membership organisation that exists to help the global health community accelerate the fight against cancer.

Founded in 1933 and based in Geneva, UICC's growing membership of over 460 organisations across 120 countries, features the world's major cancer societies, ministries of health, research institutes, treatment centres and patient groups. Together with its members, the World Health Organization, World Economic Forum and other key partners, UICC is tackling the growing cancer crisis on a global scale.

It has responsibility for the World Cancer Declaration, World Cancer Day, the World Cancer Congress and the World Cancer Leaders' Summit. Additionally, it is a founding member of the NCD Alliance, a global civil society network that now represents almost 2000 NCD organisations in 170 countries.

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