



# Economic and Social Council

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## 2020 session

Agenda item 12 (f)

### Coordination, programme and other questions: prevention and control of non-communicable diseases

## Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 22 July 2020

[on a proposal considered under silence procedure (E/2020/L.23)]

### 2020/22. United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases

*The Economic and Social Council,*

*Recalling* its resolutions [2013/12](#) of 22 July 2013, [2014/10](#) of 13 June 2014, [2015/8](#) of 9 June 2015, [2016/5](#) of 2 June 2016, [2017/8](#) of 7 June 2017, [2018/13](#) of 2 July 2018 and [2019/9](#) of 7 June 2019 on the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases,

*Recalling also* the commitments included in the 2011 political declaration of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases,<sup>1</sup> the 2014 outcome document of the high-level meeting of the Assembly on the comprehensive review and assessment of the progress achieved in the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases<sup>2</sup> and the 2018 political declaration of the third high-level meeting of the Assembly on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases,<sup>3</sup> and recalling further the proposed actions set out in the World Health Organization Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases 2013–2020,<sup>4</sup>

*Recognizing* that many countries still face significant challenges in the implementation of their commitments related to non-communicable diseases, remaining deeply concerned that the burden of non-communicable diseases continues to rise in developing countries, and expressing grave concern that the huge human and economic cost of non-communicable diseases contributes to poverty and inequities and threatens the health of peoples and the development of countries,

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<sup>1</sup> General Assembly resolution [66/2](#), annex.

<sup>2</sup> General Assembly resolution [68/300](#).

<sup>3</sup> General Assembly resolution [73/2](#).

<sup>4</sup> World Health Organization, document WHA66/2013/REC/1, annex 4.



*Reaffirming* General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, which includes non-communicable disease-related targets, including reducing by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases by 2030 through prevention and treatment, and promoting mental health and well-being, as well as support for research and development of vaccines and medicines, and recalling the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,<sup>5</sup> which noted the enormous burden that non-communicable diseases place on developed and developing countries, and that these costs are particularly challenging for developing countries,

*Recalling* the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on universal health coverage, held in New York on 23 September 2019, and reaffirming its political declaration, entitled “Universal health coverage: moving together to build a healthier world”,<sup>6</sup> which called for the further strengthening of efforts to address non-communicable diseases, including cardiovascular diseases, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases and diabetes, as well as mental disorders, other mental health conditions and neurological disorders, as part of universal health coverage,

*Underscoring* the fact that global health is a long-term objective which is national, regional and international in scope and requires sustained high-level commitment and closer international cooperation to support the efforts of Member States to achieve health goals, including those related to non-communicable diseases,

*Acknowledging* that the global burden and threat of non-communicable diseases, principally cardiovascular diseases, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases and diabetes, which are linked to one or more of the modifiable risk factors, namely, tobacco use, harmful use of alcohol, unhealthy diet and physical inactivity, as well as air pollution, as the largest environmental risk factor, and other risk factors contributing to non-communicable diseases, but also the considerable burden of mental health conditions and neurological disorders, constitutes one of the major challenges for development in the twenty-first century, which undermines social and economic development throughout the world and threatens the achievement of internationally agreed development goals,

*Noting* that the non-communicable disease-related targets included in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are linked to the impact of social, economic and environmental determinants, including air, soil and water pollution, exposure to chemicals, efforts to ensure road safety, promoting healthy diets and improving nutrition, as well as to broader determinants of health,

*Recalling* the World Health Organization global action plan on physical activity 2018–2030,<sup>7</sup> and acknowledging that increasing physical activity and reducing sedentary behaviour can contribute to broader efforts to prevent and control non-communicable diseases and improve mental health,

*Noting* the progress made by the Task Force in the execution of its mandate, including joint programming missions to an increasing number of countries and global joint programmes and thematic working groups that contribute to 30 targets of 12 Sustainable Development Goals, and that its work has a significant positive impact on national multisectoral non-communicable disease responses and development plans and policies, strengthening health systems and the empowerment of individuals, including for better health literacy,

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<sup>5</sup> General Assembly resolution 69/313, annex.

<sup>6</sup> General Assembly resolution 74/2.

<sup>7</sup> See World Health Organization, document WHA71/2018/REC/1, resolution 71.6.

*Noting also* the 2019 World Health Assembly decision that requests the identification of innovative voluntary funding mechanisms, such as a multi-donor trust fund, to support Member States, upon their request, in order to strengthen their national efforts for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases,<sup>8</sup> and acknowledging the progress by the Task Force in processing that decision,

*Noting further* the progress achieved by the Task Force in supporting Member States in the provision of access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines, diagnostics and other health technologies for non-communicable diseases, as well as in supporting countries in providing digital health programmes,

*Welcoming* the progress the Task Force makes through joint inter-agency efforts to promote public health and foster the achievement of non-communicable disease-related targets of the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as through partnerships and alliances, when applicable, for the prevention and treatment of non-communicable diseases,

*Welcoming also* the financial and in-kind support provided by Member States and international development partners for the work of the Task Force,

*Noting with concern* the continued shortage of resources available for the Task Force and, in particular, the global joint programmes developed by the Task Force that remain mostly unfunded to date, and the need for a significant increase in financing in order for the Task Force to reach its full potential in providing timely and effective specialized technical assistance to Member States,

*Taking note* of the final report of the Independent High-level Commission on Non-communicable Diseases of the World Health Organization,<sup>9</sup>

*Noting with great concern* the threat to human health caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which continues to spread globally, and recognizing that people living with non-communicable diseases are more susceptible to the risk of developing severe COVID-19 symptoms and are among the hardest hit by the pandemic,

*Acknowledging* that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic risks reversing hard-won development gains and hampering progress towards achieving all the Sustainable Development Goals, including target 3.4 on reducing by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases,

*Recalling* World Health Assembly resolution 73.1 of 19 May 2020, entitled “COVID-19 response”,<sup>10</sup> which also addressed the issue of non-communicable diseases in the context of an effective public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Director General of the World Health Organization on the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases<sup>11</sup> and the recommendations contained therein, including to report to the Economic and Social Council in 2021 on progress made in implementing Council resolution 2013/12;

2. *Commends* the Task Force for its activities aimed at supporting Member States in the achievement of the non-communicable disease-related targets of the

<sup>8</sup> World Health Organization, document WHA72/2019/REC/1, decision 72(11).

<sup>9</sup> World Health Organization, *It's Time to Walk the Talk: WHO Independent High-level Commission on Non-communicable Diseases – Final Report* (Geneva, 2019).

<sup>10</sup> World Health Organization, document WHA73.1.

<sup>11</sup> [E/2020/51](#).

Sustainable Development Goals as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;<sup>12</sup>

3. *Calls upon* bilateral and multilateral donors, as well as other stakeholders, including philanthropic foundations, civil society and the private sector, as appropriate, to mobilize human and financial resources for the programmatic work of the Task Force, inter alia, in order to deliver activities under its strategy for 2019–2021;

4. *Encourages* bilateral and multilateral donors, as well as other relevant stakeholders, to mobilize resources to support, upon request, Member States, including the least developed countries, to catalyse sustainable domestic responses to non-communicable diseases, as well as mental disorders and other mental health conditions, inter alia, through innovative voluntary funding mechanisms, such as a multi-partner trust fund, upon its establishment;

5. *Calls upon* the members of the Task Force to continue to work together to identify additional technical resources to enhance their support to Member States in line with the Task Force strategy for 2019–2021, paying particular attention to the needs of Member States during their COVID-19 response and recovery;

6. *Requests* the Task Force to further support Member States in their efforts to address the burden of non-communicable diseases, including maintaining essential health-care services and their timely delivery, providing evidence-based digital health programmes, promoting research and development of and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable diagnostics, therapeutics, essential medicines, vaccines and other health technologies, inter alia, through various related initiatives, as well as through strengthening health systems, including regulatory frameworks and good supply chain management, and through primary health care, as appropriate, paying particular attention to the needs of people living with or at risk of developing non-communicable diseases, in particular those in vulnerable situations;

7. *Also requests* the Task Force to continue strengthening inter-agency work and communication, including by engaging with relevant stakeholders, as appropriate, to achieve public health goals;

8. *Calls upon* the Task Force and its members to strengthen its capacity to provide technical and policy advice to Governments, upon request, in order to implement multisectoral strategies and enhance multi-stakeholder action, including with the private sector, with a view to strengthening their contribution to the implementation of national responses to non-communicable diseases, and to achieving universal health coverage;

9. *Encourages* members of the Task Force, within their respective mandates, to continue collaboration among each other and to support Member States, upon their request, in promoting improved nutrition, healthy diets and lifestyles;

10. *Calls upon* the Task Force and its members, within its mandate, to support, upon request, the capacity of Member States for improved regulatory and legal frameworks that promote favourable health outcomes for non-communicable diseases;

11. *Encourages* members of the Task Force, as appropriate and in line with their respective mandates, to continue to develop and implement their own policies on preventing tobacco industry interference, including those related to novel and emerging tobacco products, bearing in mind the model policy for agencies of the United Nations system on preventing tobacco industry interference, in order to ensure

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<sup>12</sup> General Assembly resolution 70/1.

consistent and effective separation between the activities of the United Nations system and those of the tobacco industry;

12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Council at its 2021 session on progress achieved in implementing resolution [2013/12](#), under the sub-item entitled “Prevention and control of non-communicable diseases” of the item entitled “Coordination, programme and other questions”.

*22 July 2020*

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