ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINANTS OF CANCER.
SUMMARIZING THE SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE, KEY POLICY OPTIONS
AND ENVIRONMENTAL INTERVENTIONS:

I.-BACKGROUND

- Cancer is the second most common cause of death worldwide after cardiovascular diseases, and it is caused to a large extent by modifiable risk factors including environmental and occupational carcinogens.
- The total economic impact of premature death and disability from cancer was $895 billion in 2008 not including direct costs of treatment.
- 63% of all cancer deaths were reported by low- and middle-income countries and only 5% of the global resources for cancer prevention and control are spent in developing countries.
- Environmental and occupational risk factors are estimated to be a substantial contributor to the cancer burden and many of them are modifiable and often result from involuntary exposure of populations.
- But the global health impact of the vast majority of environmental and occupational carcinogens has yet to be quantified.
- Reducing exposure to environmental and occupational carcinogens will result in important health co-benefits not only for cancer but also for other noncommunicable diseases such as chronic lung disease.
- Many governments have not yet included comprehensive cancer prevention strategies in their national health and cancer plans.

II.-KEY ISSUES TO BE RAISED:

- What are the opportunities for achieving comprehensive primary prevention of cancer through reduction of exposure to environmental and occupational determinants?
- To what extent can primary prevention reduce the economic burden of cancer and the burden on health systems in high-, middle- and low-income countries?
- What are the top priority cancer prevention research topics in the field of occupational and environmental exposure prevention?
- What are the barriers to translating research into strategies for primary prevention of environmental- and occupational-related cancer?
- Should we switch to a new cancer prevention paradigm, where primary prevention measures would become a cornerstone in the cancer control fight along with treatment and patient care?
- Who should be involved? What are the potential synergies?
- How can the global Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) agenda, to be discussed at the Moscow Ministerial NCD summit (April 2011) and UN General Assembly (September 2011), synergize with planned prevention policies for environmental and occupational risks?