Interactive Hearing as a part of the preparatory process towards the third High-Level Meeting of the UN General Assembly on NCDs

5 July 2018

Panel 4: Political leadership and accountability

Statement on behalf of HRIDAY (Health Related Information Dissemination Amongst Youth), an NGO based in New Delhi, India

The Political Declaration should include time-bound commitments to develop, implement and monitor national NCD plans, targets and multi-sectoral mechanisms. However, NCD response requires much more than surveillance of targets. NCD policy requires ‘Whole-of-Government’ response with buy-in and commitment from all government departments to ensure policy coherence. Such ambitious multi-sectoral action plans will succeed only if Heads of Government or Heads of State are steering this plan. The UN HLM is a political meeting with Heads of Government and State, therefore the Political Declaration must be a “leader level” political document and not technical. It should build upon the global NCD response to date, reaffirm previous commitments and targets, and include a set of forward-looking political commitments that emphasize the role and responsibility of Heads of State/Government to take action, leadership and ownership of the NCD response;

In order to overcome roadblocks and augment progress on the NCD agenda, Member States should learn from past experiences and commit to adopting effective regulatory measures for the unhealthy commodity industries (tobacco, alcohol, and processed and ultra-processed food), as well as establish and enforce strict engagement principles that manage conflicts of interest, ensure transparency, and safeguard against private sector involvement and influence on public health policymaking;

The HLM is an opportunity for governments to strengthen accountability at country and global levels. Governments must introduce independent accountability as an important component of NCD monitoring and review.

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