



ESMO Statement

148th WHO Executive Board Meeting, 18-26 January 2021

Agenda Item 6: Political Declaration of the third high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases

Honourable Chair, Esteemed Delegates,

The European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO) is a global network of more than 25,000 cancer professionals from over 160 countries.

ESMO welcomes the proposal for a review of the NCD Global Action Plan, because NCDs, which include cancer, are a leading cause of death worldwide and people with NCDs are at greater risk of poorer outcomes of COVID-19.

The repercussions of this pandemic have shown that to ensure the world's future of sustainable development countries must uphold health as a basic human right.

As medical doctors who work hard every day to save lives, we are concerned about WHO reporting that many Member States are not on track to achieve the SDGs and Political Declaration goals. This is especially concerning when WHO and UN Resolutions provide clear actionable blueprints, and the investment case included in the *WHO Report on Cancer* states that a US\$1 invested in cancer control yields “a full social return based on both direct productivity and societal gains of US\$9.50”.

We urge governments to show sustained and strong political will to accelerate implementation of the actions they have committed to by unanimously adopting WHO and UN resolutions to address NCDs and provide UHC by 2030.

We call on governments to prioritize investments in cost-effective, impactful, high-quality essential health services that are affordable, and to fully integrate cancer into NCD plans and universal health coverage packages.

We request stronger measures for cancer prevention that address the social, economic, and environmental determinants of the disease, and we applaud all efforts in health literacy to empower individuals to make informed healthy choices.

We encourage WHO and Member States to invite NSA participation in the review process of the Global Action Plan and the continued work of the Global Coordination Mechanism on NCDs that supports its implementation.

Thank you.