



UN INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE ON THE PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

9 March 2023

Remarks by H.E. Ms. Lachezara Stoeva,
President of the Economic and Social Council

I am pleased to join you for the ten-year anniversary of the UN Interagency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases.

Progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals and pledge to leave no one behind are off track.

This includes our commitments on non-communicable diseases and mental health.

Your latest report to the Economic and Social Council shows that only 14 countries are on track to achieve SDG target 3.4.¹

No country in the world is on track to achieve the full set of voluntary NCD targets for 2025 and 2030, adopted by the World Health Assembly in 2013.

COVID-19 has triggered unprecedented disruptions in efforts to ensure that people get the care they need:

¹ By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being).



As of 2022, 37 per cent of countries report disrupted services for hypertension or diabetes.

That figure is 30 per cent for asthma services and cancer treatment, and 22 per cent for cardiovascular emergencies.

Meanwhile, the long-simmering mental health crisis has reached a boiling point.

Close to 1 billion people now experience a mental health disorder.

The socio-economic impacts of NCDs and mental ill-health are massive.

Globally, US\$1 trillion is lost in economic productivity every year due to depression and anxiety alone.

We must scale up action for NCDs and mental health to advance healthier, more equitable and more secure societies.

We need to address the role of NCDs and their risk factors in worsening the impacts of COVID-19 and other health threats.

We must support country capacities to respond to post-COVID conditions.

This Task Force represents our best bet for a future free of avoidable NCD and mental health burdens.

Over the past decade, your group has been at the vanguard of supporting countries in tackling NCDs and mental ill-health.



Through joint programming missions, joint programmes, thematic groups, and support to UN country teams, this Task Force has been an exemplar of UN reform.

Your assistance to more than 40 countries has driven attention, investment, and action for NCDs and mental health.

The Economic and Social Council appreciates your annual report and your growing impact. I do see the fruits of your work as ECOSOC's contribution to the General Assembly's high-level meetings on NCDs. Your work can help countries achieve the voluntary global targets for the prevention and control of NCDs.

I welcome efforts of the Task Force and in particular WHO, UNDP and UNICEF in leading the "Health4Life Fund" that is aiming to raise \$250 million over its first five years.

As President of the Council, I am willing to use the various platforms and opportunities to encourage partners to contribute to the Fund so it can realize its full potential.

In today's age of uncertainty, we must radically reimagine how to achieve health and well-being for all.

That must include greater partnerships, cooperation and innovation to address NCDs and mental ill-health.

I congratulate you on your achievements over the past decade, but there is no room for complacency. We all count on your ambition and determination to accelerate progress toward the NCD-related SDG targets.

I am confident that this Task Force will rise to the occasion.



Thank you.