



**IOGT International Official Statement
WHO EB 144
5.4 Implementation of the 2030 Agenda
For Sustainable Development**

23.01.2019

Honorable Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates, Director General, I thank you for the opportunity to address you today.

This statement is delivered on behalf of IOGT International supported by the NCD Alliance and Vital Strategies. We welcome the comprehensive report and commend WHO for its leadership on all levels to help achieve the SDGs.

We **note with concern** that **progress on several health-related SDGs has stalled**, among them **alcohol use**.

In the context of the Agenda 2030, **alcohol harm is a major obstacle to development**. In fact, sub-saharan Africa now suffers from the heaviest burden of alcohol-related disease and injury. At the same time, an adequate response would foster comprehensive and synergistic approaches across SDGs.

In this spirit, **we propose two actions** for WHO and Member States:
1) Ensure that **cross-cutting risk factors** are **systematically** identified and coherently **addressed**. For instance, this report, like the GPW 13, fails to address alcohol as risk factor in other areas than NCDs. But poverty eradication, the elimination of violence, sustainable consumption or building more economically productive societies cannot be achieved without systematically addressing SDG 3.5. We urge WHO and Member States to revise approaches in this regard. The new WHO-led SAFER initiative should galvanize momentum and support.

2) **Accelerate the pivot to prevention**. Public policies and other evidence-based prevention measures are **economically smart, scientifically sound and**

1



absolutely vital for the SDGs. For example, the alcohol policy best buys yield a return of \$9 for every \$1 invested. Evidence-based prevention programs help avert loss of human, social and economic potential and promote sustainable development. We call on WHO and Member States for stronger action in this neglected area.

I thank you for your attention.

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