

PRESS RELEASE



**TOBACCO AND
NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

Abu Dhabi United Arab Emirates
17-21 March 2015 **WCTOH.org**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Her Royal Highness Princess Dina Mired of Jordan, Dr Margaret Chan, Michael R Bloomberg, to address World Conference on Tobacco or Health

*Conference theme to be
Tobacco and Non-communicable Diseases*

The Bloomberg Philanthropies Awards for Global Tobacco Control and The American Cancer Society's Luther L Terry Awards to honour outstanding contributions to global tobacco control

9 February 2015, Paris: The World Conference on Tobacco or Health (WCTOH) announced today that **Her Royal Highness Princess Dina Mired** of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, World Health Organization Director-General **Dr Margaret Chan**, and **Michael R. Bloomberg** will be among the speakers to address delegates to the WCTOH. The conference will be held 17-21 March 2015 at Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC) in the capital city of the United Arab Emirates.

WCTOH is a five-day scientific conference presenting the latest developments in tobacco control and global efforts to reduce tobacco use in all its forms. The conference will also present the latest findings on electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS)—also known as e-cigarettes—and particular challenges faced by the United Arab Emirates and the region— namely shisha and waterpipe use.

The conference theme is Tobacco and Non-communicable Diseases, recognising that tobacco use in all its forms is the greatest risk factor contributing to the occurrence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including cancer, cardiovascular problems, lung disease and diabetes. Tobacco use now causes one in six of all NCD deaths and up to half of current tobacco users will eventually die of a tobacco-related disease. This is the first time the WCTOH conference has focussed on this direct link between tobacco and NCDs.

Dr Margaret Chan, Director-General, WHO, said, “Tobacco control ranks among the most

effective preventive tools ever developed by public health. The lives it saves number in the millions. Tobacco control benefits from the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, which gives its 180 Parties a powerful legal instrument for fighting both demand and supply-side factors that influence tobacco use. This 16th World Conference on Tobacco or Health will re-affirm the need to implement the raft of control measures contained in the WHO FCTC, such as eliminating illicit trade in tobacco products, increasing taxes on tobacco to reduce consumption, make all public places and workplaces completely smoke-free and implementing plain packaging approaches for cigarettes and other similar deadly products.”

Dr Wael A. Al Mahmeed, WCTOH Conference President, said: “The conference’s theme of tobacco use and its impact on the prevalence of NCDs reflects the need to find solutions to the challenges we face in this area. It is imperative that the scientific community, the clinical profession and those directly affected by tobacco use, work together in integrating treatments, interventions and solutions to respond to the epidemic that is tobacco-related NCDs.”

Professor Harry Lando, Chair, WCTOH Scientific Committee said, “The tremendous response of the scientific community to this 16th WCTOH in Abu Dhabi is a reflection of the importance of these issues and the global threat that they entail. It is a challenge we must all face together and this conference is a vital step in that process.”

The WCTOH scientific programme will include discussion on:

- Global and regional progress on demand reduction measures of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC), a global treaty that this year celebrates 10 years in force;
- MPOWER, a demand reduction package that supports the scale-up of specific provisions of the treaty on the ground;
- the effects of tobacco on young people;
- the economic burden of tobacco-related diseases;
- new developments in standardised packaging, taxes and subsidies; and
- the impact of tobacco use upon tobacco users themselves.

During the conference, members of the research community will present more than 800 scientific abstracts. In addition, there will be 74 symposia and panel discussions; 20 workshops; two post-graduate courses on ‘Meeting NCD Targets’ and ‘Social Media for Tobacco Control and NCDs Prevention in LMICs’; and a Youth Pre-Conference, which will give this crucial audience their own voice in the fight against the pervasive influence of tobacco on young people worldwide. WCTOH is offering more than 400 scholarships to attend the conference to delegates from low- and middle-income countries, including Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia and Pakistan.

The Bloomberg Philanthropies Awards for Global Tobacco Control and the Luther L Terry

Awards will honour outstanding research and contributions to the field of global tobacco control.

The Bloomberg Philanthropies Awards for Global Tobacco Control. Bloomberg Philanthropies hosts the third Bloomberg Philanthropies Awards for Global Tobacco Control at the 16th WCTOH. The Awards were created to recognise governments and non-governmental organizations demonstrating excellent progress or achievement in the implementation of MPOWER measures in low-and middle-income countries. MPOWER, established by the World Health Organization as part of the implementation plan for FCTC, describes six of the most effective tobacco control policies: **M**onitoring the epidemic and prevention policies; **P**rotecting people from second-hand smoke; **O**ffering help to people want to quit; **W**arning about the dangers of tobacco; **E**nforcing bans on advertising, promotion and sponsorship; **R**aising taxes and prices. A panel of global tobacco control experts will select the awardees. The Bloomberg Philanthropies Awards ceremony will take place on Wednesday, 18 March 2015.

The American Cancer Society's Luther L Terry Awards (named for the late US Surgeon General, Luther L Terry, MD, whose ground-breaking work established the foundation for public health scrutiny of the dangers of tobacco use) are presented every three years in conjunction with the WCTOH. These awards recognise outstanding worldwide achievement in the field of tobacco control. Awards are presented in six categories: Outstanding Individual Leadership; Outstanding Organisation; Outstanding Research Contribution; Exemplary Leadership by a Government Ministry; Distinguished Career; and Outstanding Community Service. The Luther L Terry Awards ceremony will take place on Thursday, 19 March 2015.

To register for the conference, please visit: <http://www.wctoh.org/registration>

Members of the media wishing to register to cover the conference should visit: <http://www.wctoh.org/media/press-credentials>

For WCTOH Conference updates, please visit: www.wctoh.org

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Notes for Editors:

The World Conference for Tobacco or Health (WCTOH) occurs every three years and attracts around

3,000 delegates from around the world. The 16th WCTOH is in Abu Dhabi, 17-21 March 2015.

WCTOH 2015 is supported by: Bloomberg Philanthropies; Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; New Venture Fund; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; US Department of Health and Human Services (National Institutes of Health; National Cancer Institute); The International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease; American Cancer Society; Health Promotion Board Singapore; The World Health Organization; The Health Authority- Abu Dhabi; The Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority and local host The Emirates Cardiac Society.

The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) is the first international treaty negotiated under the auspices of the WHO. It was adopted by the World Health Assembly on 21 May 2003 and entered into force on 27 February 2005. It has since become one of the most rapidly and widely embraced treaties in United Nations history counting currently 179 countries and the European Region as Parties to the treaty.

WHO's *Global status report on non-communicable diseases 2014*

<http://www.who.int/nmh/publications/ncd-status-report-2014/en/> states that urgent government action is needed to meet global targets to reduce the burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and prevent the annual toll of 16 million people dying prematurely—before the age of 70—from heart and lung diseases, stroke, cancer and diabetes.

According to the WHO <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs339/en/> approximately one person dies every six seconds due to tobacco, accounting for one in 10 adult deaths. Up to half of current users will eventually die of a tobacco-related disease. Tobacco kills up to half of its users—nearly 6 million people each year. More than 5 million of those deaths are the result of direct tobacco use, while more than 600 000 are the result of non-smokers being exposed to second-hand smoke. Unless urgent action is taken, the annual death toll could rise to more than 8 million by 2030. Nearly 80 percent of the world's one billion smokers live in low- and middle-income countries.

NCD Alliance www.ncdalliance.org: Tobacco use is the one risk factor common to the major non-communicable diseases (NCDs) like cancer, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease and diabetes. NCDs kill 35 million people yearly, of which 80 per cent are in low- and middle-income countries.

Background information on the principal speakers at WCTOH:

HRH Princess Dina Mired of Jordan. HRH Princess Dina Mired has led the King Hussein Cancer Foundation (KHCF) in Jordan as Director General since 2002. In her capacity as Director and mother of a cancer survivor, she developed the fundraising and development function and programmes at KHCF, making it the largest source of non-profit funds dedicated to the fight against cancer in Jordan. Furthermore, Princess Dina is the Honorary Chairperson of the Jordan Breast Cancer Program. In September 2011, HRH delivered the keynote speech on behalf of all civil society (social, civic and voluntary organizations) on opening of the United Nations General Assembly High Level Meeting on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs); the first ever High Level meeting on NCDs and is currently an Ambassador for the Global Smoke-free Worksite Challenge Initiative.

Dr Margaret Chan, Director-General, World Health Organization (WHO). Dr Chan has been WHO Director-General since 2006. Her outstanding career in public health has included being Director of Health of Hong Kong where she introduced new initiatives to improve communicable disease surveillance and response; enhanced training for public health professionals and managed the severe outbreaks of avian influenza and of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS).

Michael R. Bloomberg. Mike Bloomberg is the founder of the global financial data services and media

company, Bloomberg LP. Between 2002 and 2013, he served as Mayor of New York City and implemented ambitious public health and anti-poverty programs, expanded support for arts and culture, substantially reduced the city's carbon footprint, and increased graduation rates and private sector job numbers to record highs. Bloomberg is also a philanthropist who has given over \$3.3 billion in support of education, the arts, government innovation, the environment, and public health. Since 2007, his foundation has committed more than \$600 million to global tobacco control work.

The logo for 'The Union' consists of a dark blue square on the left containing the text 'The Union' in white. To the right of the square, the text 'Permanent Secretariat' and 'World Conference on Tobacco or Health' is displayed in blue, followed by contact information in black and blue.

The Union

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