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**Addressing:**  
**71<sup>st</sup> Session of the WHO Regional Committee for  
South-East Asia**  
**Side Event:**  
**Preparation for the High-Level Meetings of the  
General Assembly on Tuberculosis and NCD  
prevention and control**

## **IOGT International Official Statement**

### **71<sup>st</sup> Session WHO RCM for South-East Asia**

### **Side Event: Preparation for the High-Level Meetings of the General Assembly on Tuberculosis and NCD prevention and control**

**03.09.2018**

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#### **Dear chair, Dear Excellencies,**

Thank you for the opportunity to address you briefly.

My name is Suneel Vatsyayan, representing IOGT International, the premier global network for evidence-based policy solutions and community-based interventions to prevent alcohol-related harm.

I'd like to make one comment and ask one question, please:

The two health-related High-Level Meetings are a unique opportunity to address health at the highest level and show how important global health is for achieving the SDGs. There's one major common risk factor for TB and NCDs that is often forgotten, ignored or disregarded: It's alcohol.

Alcohol causes cancer, heart disease, mental ill-health and other non-communicable diseases and it's a major risk factor for tuberculosis.

**Our question is: How are you going to ensure that both High-Level Meetings galvanize attention for this risk factor and for the best buy alcohol policy solutions to become integral parts of the response to prevent and reduce NCDs and TB?**

And my comment in this context is an invitation to all delegates and governments coming to New York in September: Please join the high-level side event on alcohol policy on September 28, co-hosted by Sri Lanka, Thailand and several other countries.

I thank you for your attention.

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