



## IOGT International Official Statement

### RC69 Agenda item 3

#### Matters arising from resolutions and decisions of the WHA and EB

19.09.2019

*European Action Plan to Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol 2012-2020*

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Honorable Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates, I thank you for the opportunity to address you on behalf of IOGT International.

We commend the Secretariat's analysis of the challenges and opportunities regarding one important matter arising from the World Health Assembly: the global and regional response to alcohol-related harm.

We are seeing a health and development emergency. But to be honest, too few political leaders are actually facing and tackling it.

**Implementation of the alcohol policy best buys has been low.** Costs of alcohol harm are high, both in terms of health system burden as well as economy and productivity losses. And **interference of the alcohol industry remains a serious problem.**

Therefore, we urge European leaders to face the harm that we are seeing in our communities, our families, our workplaces and our societies. We call on you to **make alcohol policy the priority it clearly should be.**

**IOGT International strongly supports WHO Europe's five "next steps" outlined in the information document.** To ensure best possible implementation, we call for an **updated and improved European alcohol action plan** and much better resourcing for WHO Europe commensurate with the severity of the alcohol burden.

Thanks to a decision at the World Health Assembly, WHO is reviewing the impact of the last decade of the Global Alcohol Strategy, through a consultation process with Member States. This is a **unique opportunity to assess improvements and shortcomings.**



We call on our governments to engage substantively and to **advocate bold new actions for the way forward** to achieve the progress that has eluded us so far.

To facilitate proper discussion of the review and the way forward, IOGT International calls for a **stand-alone agenda item** on alcohol policy at the WHO governing body meetings in 2020.

I thank you for your attention.

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