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MOVENDI INTERNATIONAL STATEMENT**15/08/22****WHO AFRICA RCM72 AGENDA ITEM 7****PEN-PLUS REG. STRATEGY TO ADDRESS SEVERE NCDs (AFR/RC72/4)**

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

Movendi International commends the Secretariat for the report and welcomes the resolution. Our members in communities across the African region welcome the effort to better address severe NCDs.

Nevertheless, we remain concerned about the lack of attention paid to alcohol as a major driver of severe NCDs, such as diabetes, cardiomyopathy, and hypertension.

The 2020 WHO PEN package recommends that alcohol be addressed in health centers for patients with cardiovascular disease and diabetes; it for example suggests that alcohol abstinence should be reinforced by health professionals, as part of healthy lifestyle counseling.

Addressing alcohol's contribution to the epidemic of severe NCDs is crucial for multiple reasons:

1. It helps identify and treat co-morbidities in the patient;
2. It facilitates the promotion of healthy lifestyle;
3. It ensures cost-effective use of invested resources in health centers; and
4. It helps prevent and reduce alcohol harm – and related NCDs as well as infectious diseases, such as HIV/ AIDS, tuberculosis, and COVID-19.

We call on Member States and WHO Africa to:

- Invest in addressing alcohol as a major risk factor for severe NCDs;
- Train and empower health centers to address alcohol with their patients; and
- Use alcohol policy interventions to reduce costs and generate funds for the overall response to NCDs.

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