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MOVENDI INTERNATIONAL STATEMENT

29/05/23

WHA76 AGENDA ITEM 26

COLLABORATION WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM AND WITH OTHER INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (A76/36)

We welcome the report about WHO's engagement with the United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations during 2022. We congratulate the Secretariat for outstanding work and improved coordination at all levels with the wider UN system.

WHO's engagement with the United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations is a critical part of WHO's normative leadership role in international health work.

An aligned approach to global governance for health and coherent implementation of WHO norms and standards is essential to reach the health-related SDGs.

The members of Movendi International are, however, gravely concerned about the apparent lack of coherence and collaboration in the UN system with regards to alcohol harm – as public health priority and major obstacle to sustainable development.

Alcohol harm is a serious obstacle to sustainable development, negatively affecting 14 of 17 SDGs. Nevertheless, respective custodian UN agencies are often not addressing alcohol harm at all to achieve progress towards SDG targets.

To the contrary, multiple UN agencies and programs take money from and collaborate with alcohol companies and their front groups. This is a clear, direct, and fundamental conflict of interest concerning WHO norms, standards, and recommendations.

UNICEF ambassadors are alcohol brand promoters. UNITAR takes money from alcohol industry giants. UNDP country offices collaborate with alcohol companies. UN Women partners with Big Alcohol.

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These engagements are riddled with conflicts of interest and are harming the global health and development agenda.

- They put children and youth in harm's way.
- They undermine the global road safety agenda and exploit road safety partnerships to undermine alcohol policy making initiatives around the world.
- They derail ambitious and evidence-based alcohol policy development in the public interest at country level.
- They put women and girls in harm's way.

Transformational change in the way multilateral agencies collectively support countries in accelerating progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals is not possible if and when UN programs and agencies continue to take money from and partner with alcohol companies. The alcohol industry is undermining WHO-recommended alcohol policy solutions that are proven to promote health and development for all.

We call on WHO and the wider UN system to improve internal norms, standards, and conflict of interest protections.

We call on the wider UN system to end all engagement with alcohol companies and their front groups.

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