

8 December 2011

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser,  
President of the 66<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly,  
at the First Meeting of UN Funds, Programmes and Agencies on the  
Implementation of the Political Declaration of the High-level Meeting  
of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-  
communicable Diseases**

*Delivered by Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury, Senior Special Advisor to the President*

Distinguished colleagues,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

As the Senior Special Advisor to the President of the General Assembly, I am pleased to deliver this message from the President, His Excellency Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser.

At the outset, let me thank the World Health Organisation (WHO) for organizing this first meeting of UN Funds, Programmes and Agencies on implementing the Political Declaration of the first-ever General Assembly High-level Meeting on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs), which I had the honour of convening on 19 September.

The political will expressed at the September Meeting on NCDs was a major breakthrough achieved by the international community in protecting the world's most vulnerable populations.

Thanks to the engagement of Member States, the UN system, in particular WHO, and civil society, NCDs were given the well-deserved priority on the global development agenda. A mandate was established, and clear responsibilities were afforded.

Heads of State and Government committed to developing national capacity for addressing NCDs, and to strengthening their national NCD policies and plans.

The Secretary-General was requested to submit options to the General Assembly for strengthening and facilitating multisectoral action for the prevention and control of NCDs through effective partnership.

And you, the UN Funds, Programmes and Agencies, were urged to provide technical assistance and capacity-development in NCD prevention and control to developing countries, especially the Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

The political declaration is a comprehensive document. It lays concrete foundations for forward movement. But the true value of our work lies in its effective implementation.

Thrust of my message to you here is - let us work together to ensure that the commitments made on 19 September become a reality. This is our shared responsibility.

On your part, concerted and coordinated action across the UN-system is central to ensure that the UN is effective in delivering as one.

The outcome of the High-Level Meeting reaffirmed a vision that goes beyond health and recognized the impact non-communicable diseases have on our development efforts and our economies in general.

While we continue to remain targeted and vigilant in our approach as outlined in our political declaration, as we move forward, I believe the definition of “NCDs” should be broadened. Today our attention is focused on just a few diseases, thereby denying attention and help to tackling no less fatal diseases of the body and mind.

Mental health, including depression, is one such under-addressed disease and remains a threat to health and well-being worldwide. As operational experts, your understanding, perspective and efforts would contribute to advancing this issue.

My Presidency of the General Assembly stands ready to support all your purposeful efforts in every way possible.

I wish you a successful meeting.