

Constituency Statement on the World Health Assembly Resolution on Sensory Impairment

Agenda Item 13.1 – Follow-up to the political declaration of the third high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases

Leading organization: International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness

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Non-State Actors participating in the Statement:

- International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness
- CBM Christoffel-Blindenmission Christian Blind Mission
- L'Organisation Pour La Prevention De La Cecite (OPC)
- The Fred Hollows Foundation
- The Royal Commonwealth Society for Blind (Sightsavers)
- World Blind Union (WBU)
- International Society of Audiology (ISA)
- International Federation of Oto-Rhino-Laryngological Societies (IFOS)

Statement:

Thank you, Honorable Chair and esteemed delegates.

We commend Member States and WHO for recognizing the global burden of vision and hearing impairment and for advancing the resolution on primary prevention and integrated care for sensory impairments across the life course. With over 2.2 billion people affected by vision impairment and 1.5 billion by hearing loss—disproportionately so in low resource settings, there is an urgent need to accelerate action and deliver inclusive integrated, people-centred solutions.

This resolution marks an important milestone towards strengthening primary health care and advancing universal health coverage. Integrated and accessible eye, ear and hearing care contributes to health system efficiency, improves quality of life, reduces impact of impairments causing disability, and enhances social and economic participation.

As we look ahead, we strongly advocate for the explicit recognition of noncommunicable eye and ear conditions and vision and hearing impairment in the upcoming Fourth High-level Political Declaration on NCDs. We urge countries to ensure evidence-based eye, ear and hearing care interventions such as health promotion, timely screening, treatment, and rehabilitation—within primary health care, national NCD strategies, and UHC plans. This is essential to reduce preventable Vision and hearing loss, address inequalities, and accelerate progress toward the SDGs.

We reaffirm our commitment to supporting governments and WHO in implementing this resolution and ensuring that no one is left behind due to avoidable vision and hearing impairment.