

General Conference

GC(54)/DEC/8

Date: September 2010

General Distribution

Original: English

Fifty-fourth regular session

Item 5 of the agenda
(GC(54)/16)

Message to the UN-MDG High-level Plenary Meeting in New York

Decision adopted on 20 September 2010 during the first plenary meeting

1. There is a growing awareness among the IAEA Member States about the enormous magnitude of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) globally and particularly in developing countries, which kill more than twice as many people as tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and malaria combined. Within the NCDs, the burden posed by cancer needs special attention due to its large incidence, mortality and the often excessive cost and complexity of its treatment, involving surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy. Once known as the disease of the rich, today most new cancer cases are diagnosed in the developing world where access to cancer diagnosis and treatment is very limited.
2. The IAEA plays an important role in supporting its Member States' efforts in fighting cancer through its radiation medicine programme. The World Health Organization (WHO) and IAEA with their mandates on public health and radiation medicine have established a Joint Programme on Cancer Control and are working together through the IAEA's Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT) to place cancer on the global agenda.
3. The IAEA General Conference wishes to express its full support to the discussions of the UN-MDG High-level Plenary meeting, and, in particular, strongly endorses the actions proposed by WHO in preparing for the next High-level Meeting planned in September 2011 at the UN Headquarters in New York. The Conference firmly believes that the support of the world leaders and the UN system is crucial to enhance the focus on the impact of cancer and other NCDs across the developing world. This must be followed by sustained action at the highest levels in Member States with support from WHO and the IAEA, and other key organizations, to develop the necessary infrastructure and capacity in developing countries to end the growing disparity in cancer survival between rich and poor countries and help save millions of lives.