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## **UN health assembly adopts resolutions on child injury and non-communicable diseases**



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Delegates at a United Nations health gathering today adopted resolutions on preventing child injury and preparing for the forthcoming General Assembly high-level conference on non-communicable diseases.

The resolution on child injury prevention adopted by the ongoing [64th World Health Assembly](#) (WHA) of the UN World Health Organization ([WHO](#)) creates a platform designed to prevent injuries, which are the leading cause of death for children over the age of five. The resolution has to be adopted in the WHA plenary.

Delegates to the WHA said child injuries represented a major child survival issue that required more attention and resources. More than 830,000 children die each year from road traffic crashes, drowning, burns, falls and poisoning.

Effective interventions to prevent such injuries include enforcing speed limits around schools, placing children in child restraints in the back seats of vehicles, removing or covering water hazards, installing smoke alarms, and setting up poison control centres.

The report on child injury prevention shows that at least 558,000 people under the age of 20 in South-East Asia and Africa died from such causes, compared to a global total of 950,366 deaths.

Countries also unanimously endorsed the resolution on preparations for the General Assembly's high-level meeting on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), which will be held in September.

Non-communicable diseases, primarily heart and lung diseases, cancers and diabetes, have become leading causes of death, according to the WHO global status report on NCDs. In 2008, 36.1 million people died from conditions such as these diseases, including 9 million who died prematurely before the age of 60. Some 8 million of those premature deaths occurred in low- and middle-income countries.

Millions of deaths can be prevented by stronger implementation of measures that exist today, Ala Alwan, WHO's Assistant Director-General for NCDs and Mental Health, told a news conference in Geneva. The measures include policies that promote government-wide action against NCDs; stronger anti-tobacco controls and promoting healthier diets, physical activity, and reducing harmful use of alcohol; and improving people's access to essential health care.

The resolution recognized WHO's leading role as the primary specialized agency for health and reaffirmed its leadership in promoting global action against NCDs.

The World Health Assembly is the decision-making body of WHO and brings together delegations from all WHO Member States to determine the policies of the Organization and its approve proposed programme budget.

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