



Mr Simon Stiell

Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

## Health organisations call on the UNFCCC for robust conflict of interest management of COP following Coca-Cola's COP27 sponsorship

Dear Mr Stiell,

We, as health organisations concerned by the threat to human and planetary health posed by the climate crisis, write to voice our objection to Coca-Cola sponsoring the Conference of Parties (COP27) in Sharm El Sheikh. As the UNFCCC Executive Secretary tasked with the unique and vital mandate of supporting the global response to the threat of climate change, we ask you to establish mechanisms to mitigate against and limit the influence of environment- and health-harming industries on COP-related policy making and commitments. All sponsors of UNFCCC events must fully respect human rights, including the right to health and to a [healthy environment](#), and align their operations with the 1.5°C tipping point.

Corporate partnerships and sponsorship of the COP - in this instance with and by the [world's leading plastic polluter](#) and a fueller of disease - implies United Nations (UN) and broader government and public tolerance and endorsement of health-harming practices of such corporations. It puts the transparency and evidence-informed nature of COP27 policy dialogues and negotiations at [risk](#). Providing such a high profile platform for corporate actors to 'greenwash' their reputation is incompatible with the aims of climate change negotiations. It contributes to the illusion of their commitment to change while their fossil fuel-intensive industries remain key drivers of the climate crisis and the attendant negative impacts on human and planetary health.

We applaud the UN Climate Change Conferences for bringing [global attention](#) to the climate crisis [directly affecting health](#). Not only is Coca-Cola the world's leading plastic polluter, but its products are of vital concern for public health as the consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages are linked to obesity, poor oral health and noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), including cancer and diabetes. The Company has a very poor track record of achieving its sustainability pledges, is [increasing plastic use](#), and utilising [corporate playbook tactics](#) to undermine plastic recycling efforts - all the while spending over \$4 billion to promote its products. As the [CEO of Coca-Cola recently told investors](#), in "every previous crisis, military, economic or pandemic, in the last 134 years, the Coke Company has come out stronger". Let's not allow climate and increased poor health to be yet more crises Coca-Cola is enabled to exploit.

Discussions around planetary and human health must not take place in siloes. [The Lancet Global Syndemic Commission Report](#) calls for a systems approach to address underlying and common drivers of obesity, undernutrition and climate change. Global dietary patterns are shifting towards higher consumption of ultra-processed foods and beverages, contributing to the [food system's global CO2 emissions \(20-35%\)](#). Undernutrition, obesity, and other dietary risks for NCDs constitute the [biggest cause \(19%\) of ill-health and premature death globally](#). There is an urgent need for effective action to address the [over 12 million annual deaths attributable to unhealthy diets](#) alone.

For decades, corporate power has been exercised by the tobacco, alcohol, ultra-processed foods, and fossil fuel industries to resist, delay and subvert evidence-informed public health policy at all levels. Sophisticated strategies to further corporate interests to the detriment of health and climate change call for much stricter risk assessment

and action, to ensure that policy processes are developed free from real or perceived conflicts of interest and undue corporate influence. UN agencies, processes, and UN Member States must exercise coherence across all sectors: by setting clear rules of engagement, the Secretariat has the opportunity to veto environment- and health-harming corporate actors from using the COP sessions to promote their own interests and undermine climate action.

To ensure the public interest and evidence-based policy making and commitments prevail in these and future negotiations, we call on you to develop and enforce robust mechanisms to mitigate against corporate capture and limit and manage conflicts of interest and undue influence arising from, for example, the association of companies such as Coca-Cola with COP27. Addressing both the climate crisis and the obesity and undernutrition epidemic is urgent. The UNFCCC has an important contribution to make and we look to you to exercise leadership to ensure healthy COPs now and in the future.

Signed,

<b>ACT Health Promotion Brasil</b>	<b>Global Health 50/50</b>	<b>SAMRC Centre for Health Economics and Decision Science-PRICELESS SA</b>
<b>Action Against Hunger</b>	<b>Global Health Advocacy Incubator</b>	<b>SPECTRUM</b>
<b>Africa NCDs Network</b>	<b>HEALA</b>	<b>Swedish Institute for Global Health Transformation SIGHT</b>
<b>Alianza por la Salud Alimentaria, Mexico</b>	<b>Health and Climate Network</b>	<b>Tanzania NCD Alliance</b>
<b>ANAQ Foundation</b>	<b>Healthy Caribbean Coalition</b>	<b>The George Institute for Global Health</b>
<b>Brazilian Alliance for Healthy and Adequate Food</b>	<b>Healthy India Alliance</b>	<b>The Institute for Social Marketing &amp; Health, University of Stirling</b>
<b>Cameroon NCD Alliance</b>	<b>Heart Foundation of Jamaica</b>	<b>The Interamerican Heart Foundation Argentina (FIC Argentina)</b>
<b>Center for Epidemiological Studies in Health and Nutrition, USP</b>	<b>HRDAY</b>	<b>Tobacco Control Research Group and Beacon for 21st Century Public Health</b>
<b>Center for Science in the Public Interest</b>	<b>IDEC</b>	<b>Treatment Action Campaign</b>
<b>CLUCOD</b>	<b>Institute of Alcohol Studies</b>	<b>Trinidad and Tobago NCD Alliance</b>
<b>Coalition for Americas' Health CLAS</b>	<b>International Association of Dental Research</b>	<b>UK Working Group on NCDs</b>
<b>Diabetes Fighters' Trust</b>	<b>Kamran Abassi, Editor in Chief, The British Medical Journal</b>	<b>VicHealth</b>
<b>EarthMedic and EarthNurse Foundation for Planetary Health</b>	<b>Lake Health and Wellbeing</b>	<b>Vision for Alternative Development</b>
<b>European Public Health Alliance</b>	<b>Liverpool Obesity Research Network</b>	<b>Vital Strategies</b>
<b>FIAN Brasil</b>	<b>MOVENDI International</b>	<b>World Against Cancer</b>
<b>Freshwater Action Network Mexico</b>	<b>National Action for Sugar Reduction</b>	<b>World Cancer Research Fund International</b>
<b>Gatefield</b>	<b>National Institute of Public Health Mexico</b>	<b>World Heart Federation</b>
<b>Ghana NCD Alliance</b>	<b>NCD Alliance</b>	<b>World Obesity Federation</b>
<b>Global Climate and Health Alliance</b>	<b>NCD Child</b>	<b>Zambia Heart and Stroke Foundation</b>
<b>Global Diet and Activity Research Network</b>	<b>Reconciliation and Development Association</b>	
<b>Global Food Research Program University of North Carolina</b>	<b>Red PaPaz</b>	

## **World Obesity Federation**

Suite 410, 107-111 Fleet Street, London EC4A 2AB

T: +44 (0)20 7936 9987 E: [enquiries@worldobesity.org](mailto:enquiries@worldobesity.org)

[www.worldobesity.org](http://www.worldobesity.org)

Registered charity number 1076981. Registered in England and Wales, 3802726. A company limited by guarantee.