

UN Resolution caps momentous year for diabetes world

On 21 December 2006 the United Nations General Assembly passed a Resolution recognising the global threat of the diabetes epidemic. For the first time, governments have acknowledged that a non-infectious condition poses as serious a threat to world health as infectious diseases.

The Unite for Diabetes campaign brought together the largest ever diabetes coalition, including patient organisations from over 150 countries, the majority of the world's scientific and professional diabetes societies, many charitable foundations, service organisations and industry.

The People's Republic of Bangladesh steered the diplomatic process that resulted in the passing of the Resolution. The cause was taken up by the G77 (a coalition of 133 developing and transitional countries at the UN led by the Republic of South Africa). The ownership of the Resolution by this majority voting bloc convinced the countries of the developed world to throw their support behind the Resolution.

Professor Martin Silink, International Diabetes Federation (IDF) President and Chair of the Unite for Diabetes campaign, explained the importance of the Resolution: 'A key battle has been won in the fight against diabetes. The significance is

monumental. It will inspire, energise and empower the diabetes world. People said it couldn't be done, but only 6 months since launching our campaign we have achieved our first goal. The struggle will now focus on helping and encouraging governments worldwide to develop national policies to improve diabetes care and prevention.'

Over 380 million people will live with diabetes by 2025 if significant action is not taken. According to the IDF, the vast majority, more than 300 million, will live in developing countries. 'If nothing is done, it is the developing world that will once again bear the brunt of the world's disease burden,' said Jean-Claude Mbanya, IDF President-Elect. 'Governments worldwide must work with the diabetes community and society to tackle the problem. People with diabetes must be part of the solution. It is our hope that, with the recognition of the United Nations, the diabetes epidemic can now emerge from the shadows.'

The Resolution designates World Diabetes Day, November 14th, as a United Nations Day to be observed every year starting in 2007. It calls on all UN Member States to observe the day and on all nations to develop national policies for the prevention, treatment and care of diabetes.

The Changing Diabetes Bus begins its World Tour to change attitudes to diabetes

Under the motto 'a global drive to change diabetes', Novo Nordisk has unveiled the Changing Diabetes Bus. This unique vehicle is undertaking a one-and-a-half year-long journey around the world to raise diabetes awareness.

Facing up to the fact that the public needs to be shown that diabetes can affect anyone and that lifestyle choices can play

a huge role its prevention, the tour is committed to educating as many people as possible to allow them to take action themselves.

The bus and its messages will be relevant to every visitor: people passing by, people with diabetes, healthcare professionals and decision-makers can all learn something new about diabetes.

Each corner of the bus features an important

theme in the fight against diabetes. It is hoped that the big plasma video screens, computers and the possibility of having a diabetes test or a BMI measurement will keep visitors busy while they get an overview of the past, present and likely future

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scenarios of diabetes.

The bus was launched in Denmark on the occasion of

the 42nd Annual Meeting of the European Association for the Study of Diabetes, and has so far paid a visit to the International Diabetes Federation's world congress in Cape Town, South Africa (3-7 December 2006). After spending the first part of 2007 in Australia, the bus will continue on its global journey, which is due to end in New York, US, on the first World Diabetes Day, November 14 2007.

