The Global Challenge of Eliminating Cervical Cancer
Concept note

Cervical cancer is a major public health issue around the world, caused by the infection of the papillomavirus (HPV). **In the EU** it is the 2nd most common cancer affecting women between 15-44 years old. According to the European Center for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), every year 33,000 cases are detected and 15,000 deaths from cervical cancer occur in the EU. There is a **clear divide** in incidence and mortality between Western and Northern Europe and Eastern Europe. **Globally,** 570,000 new cases are diagnosed each year, with 311,000 deaths. Cervical cancer is a considerable burden in developing countries and especially in **sub-Saharan Africa**. In low-income countries, the incidence is twice as high and the associated mortality three times as high among the most vulnerable women. Yet cervical cancer is a **preventable disease and** it is **curable** when detected early and treated adequately. No woman should die when we have the technical, medical and political tools to eliminate cervical cancer. On 17 November 2020, following the call of Dr Tedros Ghebreyesus, **WHO** launched its **Global strategy** aiming to reduce mortality from cervical cancer by 30%, by combining the effect of three interventions known as Strategy 90.70.90. For the first time, **194 countries** have committed to eliminating cancer. Early February, the European Commission presented its **'Europe's Beating Cancer' plan** with ambitious targets for HPV vaccination and cancer screening. Through our shared commitment, we have a unique opportunity to join forces to eliminate cervical cancer.

When: **25 February 2021, 11:00-13:00 CET**
Where: Fully virtual
Duration: 2h00
Targeted audience: European governments, European Commission, MEPs, donors, International Organisations, Civil Society.

Key notes:

- **Keynote EU Commissioner for Health Stella Kyriakides**
- **Keynote Dr Princess Nothemba Simelela, WHO Assistant Director-General for Strategic Programmatic Priorities**

Panellists:

- Representatives from African governments
- Representatives from international organizations
- Representatives from France
- Patients associations and experts from Africa and the EU
- European Parliamentarians
- European and International NGOs

Draft programme

Plenary

Welcome words by Hon. **Dr Chrysoula Zacharopoulou**, MEP, surgeon-gynaecologist

Keynote address

Stella Kyriakides, EU Commissioner for Health **- confirmed**
Dr Princess Nothemba Simelela, WHO Assistant Director-General for Strategic Programmatic Priorities (TBC)

Panel 1: Fighting cervical cancer in Europe

Panellists

- **Hon. Dovile Šakalienė, MP, Lithuania -** *opening address* - **confirmed**
- **Neil Datta,** Secretary General of the European Parliamentary Forum for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights - **confirmed**
- **Prof. Dr. Philippe Morice**, President of the European Society for Gynaecological Oncology, Gustave Roussy Institute, France **- confirmed**
- **Jacqueline Daly,** Board Secretary, European Cancer Patient Coalition - **confirmed**

⇨ Europe's Beating Cancer Plan ; best practices and challenges in Europe ; WHO global strategy ;

Panel 2: Global synergies - WHO strategy & EU's external action

Panellists

- **H.E. Pr. Benjamin Hounkpatin, Minister of Health, Republic of Benin -** *opening address* **- confirmed**
- **H.E. Stéphanie Seydoux,** French Ambassador for Global Health **- confirmed**
- **Elisabete Weiderpass**, Director, International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) - **confirmed**
- **Dr. Bastian Jager**, on behalf of EU Delegation to Zambia and COMESA **- confirmed**
- **Maud Mwakasungula,** Women's Coalition Against Cancer, Malawi - **confirmed**

⇨ WHO global strategy ; EU's external action for the elimination of cervical cancer; Successful synergies between health donors, policy makers and civil society

Closing remarks

H.E. Sika Kaboré, First Lady, Burkina Faso (TBC)
H.E. Delphine O, Secretary General, Generation Equality Forum **- confirmed**