

Statement on behalf of the International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE) for the 69th Session of the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean, 10 to 13 October 2022

The International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE) promotes evidence-based treatment for people with epilepsy through its 128 National Chapters.

ILAE thanks all Member States for their unanimous approval of the 2022-2031 Intersectoral Global Action Plan on Epilepsy and Other Neurological Disorders at the 75th World Health Assembly earlier this year.

ILAE, together with the International Bureau for Epilepsy, wishes to work in partnership with member states and WHO to close the current epilepsy treatment, inclusion, and research gaps.

Over 5 million people in the Eastern Mediterranean region have epilepsy. Despite the fact that an annual course of effective anti-seizure medicines costs only five US dollars, fewer than one in four people with epilepsy in the Eastern Mediterranean region have access to treatment.

Untreated epilepsy kills – the mortality rate for someone with untreated epilepsy is three times that of the general population.

Untreated epilepsy disables – untreated epilepsy is responsible for the global loss of over 13 million disability adjusted life years every year.

And not treating epilepsy is also extremely costly – it is estimated that worldwide over 650 billion US dollars are lost each year due to lack of adequate treatment for epilepsy.

ILAE hopes that service coverage for epilepsy in the Eastern Mediterranean region can significantly increase so that by the end of this decade:

- 90% of the estimated 10 million people with epilepsy in the Eastern Mediterranean region are aware of their diagnosis and aware that it is a treatable brain disorder
- At least 80% of people with epilepsy have access to safe and affordable anti-seizure medicines
- And over 70% of people receiving treatment achieve good seizure control.

Through its global network of over 26,000 epilepsy professionals, ILAE can provide support to national health authorities in:

- Gathering information on the health and economic burden of epilepsy
- Developing effective patient-centred models of care
- Improving knowledge through education and training
- Advancing research into epilepsy
- Using expanded epilepsy service to strengthen care for other neurological disorders

ILAE looks forward to working with Member States and the World Health Organization on the Intersectoral Global Action Plan on Epilepsy and Other Neurological Disorders to achieve a world where no person's life is limited by epilepsy.