



PRESS RELEASE

At the 67th Regional Committee of WHO Africa, IFPA advocates for psoriasis in the African and Global NCD agenda

- *The WHO Regional Office for Africa (WHO/AFRO) in collaboration with IFPA organized a Side Event at the 67th Session of the WHO Regional Committee for Africa which is held in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.*
- *The Side Event raised awareness of the Resolution WHA 67.9 and the WHO Global report on psoriasis and the need for early screening of psoriasis patients for comorbidities, especially diabetes and CVDs and providing early diagnosis and care for people living with psoriasis.*
- *Psoriasis takes a heavy mental, social and economic toll on over 125 million people worldwide.*
- *To address the disease's impact, IFPA has officially launched the Global Psoriasis Coalition to unite stakeholders across borders, disease areas and sectors.*

Stockholm, 1 September 2017 – On 31 August, WHO AFRO and IFPA convened health ministers and leading health officials from 47 WHO member states in Africa at a side event on the subject of psoriasis at the 67th Regional Committee of the World Health Organisation. The side event “Psoriasis in the NCD Agenda – the Road to 2018,” aimed to shed light on the ongoing need for action on psoriasis and called for its inclusion in global NCD discussions.

The side event was chaired by Dr Matshidiso Moeti, the WHO Regional Director for Africa, who made welcome remarks followed by Dr Hoseah Waweru, IFPA Vice-President, who provided an introduction of the side event. The event comprised several sessions which included policy landscape around NCDs and WHO Action Plan. With this side event, WHO and IFPA aimed to raise awareness on psoriasis as a serious non-communicable disease and its impact on people's lives, to provide a forum to share hand-on examples of policies that bring profound returns on investment in the functioning of the health systems, and to share with participants a set of actions tailored for a variety of stakeholder which can be easily adopted and could multiply the effects in prevention and control of other NCDs.

Dr Steven V. Shongwe, the acting Director of the Non-communicable diseases (NCD) cluster at the WHO Regional Office for Africa, emphasized that, "members states need to follow up the work done after the resolution. We at the WHO want to help move the agenda and the integration of psoriasis in NCDs and at services delivered at primary health care. We need to provide hope and support".



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION
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Furthermore, the presenters including Prof. Gerald Yonga, Foundation Head of NCDs Research to Practice & Policy Unit at Agha Khan University; Ms. Sophie Andersson, IFPA Executive Director; and Dr. Vicki Pinkney-Atkinson, Director of South African NCD Alliance, discussed the nature of the disease, the potential social return on investment in psoriasis and the need for a holistic, patient-centric view. An overriding theme of the session was that more can be done to address psoriasis, and inclusion in the WHO NCD agenda is a critical step to drive action. The side event also served as the official Africa region presentation of the Global Psoriasis Coalition – a new IFPA programme that unites diverse voices under the slogan “We’re all in for 125 million.”

The Global Psoriasis Coalition brings together stakeholders to cooperate across borders, disease areas and sectors to improve the lives of the 125 million people worldwide living with psoriasis. By uniting professional societies, non-governmental organisations, foundations, corporate partners and other relevant associations, the Coalition aims to center global health conversation on psoriasis, foster behavioral change and create opportunities to change the living conditions of people with psoriasis. Specific aims of the Coalition include managing psoriasis, fostering new cross-sectoral partnerships and driving the inclusion of psoriasis in comprehensive global and national NCD strategies, such as the WHO’s Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs (2013-2020).

The side event was attended by more than 130 delegates including 47 ministers of health and heads of delegations from member states, and senior officials from the WHO and AFRO member states.

About IFPA

The International Federation of Psoriasis Associations (IFPA) is a non-profit organization made up of psoriasis associations from around the world. As the main global psoriasis patient organization, IFPA’s goals are to empower its members, improve living conditions for people with psoriasis and/or psoriatic arthritis, raise awareness of the disease and cooperate with fellow stakeholders. Key IFPA actions include World Psoriasis Day (annually on October 29) and a scientific psoriasis conference every three years. Since its founding in 1971, IFPA has continuously sought to resolve the challenges facing over 125 million people with psoriasis worldwide.

Learn more about IFPA at www.ifpa-pso.com or contact IFPA’s Executive Director, Ms Sophie Andersson, at Sophie.Andersson@ifpa-pso.com.