



INTERNATIONAL LONGEVITY CENTER GLOBAL ALLIANCE

International Longevity Center Global Alliance

Cape Town Declaration on a Global Response to Dementia A Call to Action

Preamble

Whereas, the International Longevity Center (ILC) Global Alliance is an international consortium whose members seek to understand and address the profound consequences of population ageing and increasing longevity on society and individuals;

We make this Declaration to enhance awareness of the rapidly increasing prevalence of dementia, to support the rights of persons with dementia as well the rights of family members and caregivers, and to call for action. For purposes of this document, dementia is defined as a chronic, progressive and terminal disorder involving deterioration in multiple areas of cognitive functioning, and often associated with behavioural, psychological and functional impairment;

We note the ongoing global rise in the number of persons aged 60 years and older, with the age group 80 years and older being the world's fastest growing population segment.¹ This demographic phenomenon is accompanied by an increase in the incidence of age-related health conditions including dementia which is projected to increase from 35.6 million cases in 2010 to 115.4 million by 2050;²

We emphasise the devastating impact of dementia on society, families and individuals. Dementia robs afflicted persons of their memory, cognitive functioning, and ability to contribute

¹ *An Ageing World: 2008* United States Census Bureau, International Population Reports.

² *World Alzheimer Report 2009* Alzheimer's Disease International.

fully to family life and to participate in community life. Dementia burdens families and society with not only the direct costs of health and social care but also indirect costs relating to the informal care of persons with dementia;

We note that by 2050 nearly 80 percent of the world's older population is projected to live in less developed regions.³ With competing demands for limited resources, nations in these regions will be particularly challenged to shoulder the direct and indirect costs of dementia care;

We observe with concern that health care needs of older persons, mental health care in particular, are often accorded a low priority, especially so in the developing world which remains focused on the treatment and prevention of communicable disease, and maternal and childhood health care;

We affirm the human rights of all persons and, within the context of this document, we emphasise the human rights of older persons and persons with disabilities. We recall the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights which recognises the right to “the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.” We further recall the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities which obligates States Parties to implement measures to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities who include those with dementia;

We celebrate the ten-year anniversary of the adoption of the *Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002*, and urge governments to continue to implement the Plan's recommendations: specifically, to develop strategies, to conduct research, to implement programmes, and to deliver services and training which “increase the level of quality assessment and diagnosis of Alzheimer's and related disorders at an early stage” and enhance the quality of life of persons with dementia and their caregivers; and

We invite international, regional and national organisations to support and adopt this Declaration and strengthen co-operation in addressing dementia and its impact.

³ *An Ageing World.*

Now, therefore, the International Longevity Center Global Alliance

Proclaims this Declaration on a Global Response to Dementia to be a call to action for all levels of government and for civil society, academia, communities and individuals to promote and protect the rights of persons with dementia as well as the rights of their family members and caregivers, by:

1. Engaging in a multidisciplinary dialogue to establish a common framework of standards for the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of dementia;
2. Developing and implementing intergovernmental and national integrated policies and plans of action dedicated to dementia, as well as comprehensive policies and plans of action on ageing which incorporate dementia;
3. Supporting increased funding by governmental and non-governmental sources of research on all aspects of dementia and associated caregiving;
4. Urging pharmaceutical companies to develop and supply affordable dementia medications to less developed regions;
5. Increasing the number of health care professionals trained in geriatrics, and in dementia in particular, in order to enhance dementia screening and diagnostic skills, and the provision of ongoing care;
6. Developing awareness of and education on dementia, including measures to prevent or delay the onset of dementia and to reduce the discrimination and isolation often experienced by persons with dementia and their family members;
7. Establishing models of care for persons with dementia which partner health care services with housing services, community based care and legal protection;
8. Instituting measures to ensure the safety of older persons with dementia and protect them from abuse, in both domestic settings and institutional settings such as hospitals and long-term care facilities;
9. Encouraging civil society organisations to advocate for improved dementia care and to expand care services to older persons with dementia and their caregivers;
10. Providing support, including training and respite care services, to informal caregivers of older persons with dementia;
11. Supporting the drafting and adoption of a United Nations convention on the human rights of older persons which would clarify those rights, create binding obligations on states,

enhance accountability, and raise awareness of the issues which impact the lives of older persons including those with dementia;

12. Ensuring that all plans, strategies and programmes are developed in consultation with persons with dementia and their families and caregivers.

Adopted by the International Longevity Center Global Alliance on the 26th day of October, 2010, in Cape Town, South Africa.

International Longevity Center Global Alliance Partners:

ILC–Argentina

ILC–Czech Republic

ILC–Dominican Republic

ILC–France

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ILC–Japan

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