

Agenda

Bridging Continents, United Against Cancer: Delivering on the Cairo Commitment

09.30 – 12:15 CET
April 15th, 2025
Villa Aurelia – Largo Porta San Pancrazio, Rome,
Italy

Unity in Action: The MENA–EU Cancer Care Partnership

On April 15th, 2025, leaders from across the MENA region and the European Union will gather at Villa Aurelia in Rome for a pivotal event. This meeting marks a direct continuation of the momentum generated by the **Cairo Declaration of Cooperation**, signed on January 24th, 2025, by ten Arab League member states. That declaration was a powerful call to action—uniting countries in their commitment to reduce cancer mortality and bridge disparities in access to care through cross-regional collaboration, resource sharing, and coordinated strategies. Now, the Rome meeting becomes the launchpad for turning that political will into concrete, collaborative efforts.

Objectives of the Event

- **Operationalize the Cairo Declaration** through actionable partnerships and joint programming.
- **Foster cross-regional collaboration** on early detection, screening, and the use of emerging technologies.
- **Advance capacity building** by promoting training in tele-oncology, palliative care, and diagnostics.
- **Promote best practice exchange** in digital pathology, AI-powered tools, and personalized medicine.
- **Establish a foundation** for sustained engagement through a shared roadmap and future commitments.

Expected Outcomes

- The **formal signing of a pilot agreement** between the **Egyptian Cancer Society** and the **Italian Alliance Against Cancer**, representing a first tangible step toward regional alignment.
- A series of **Partner Centre Spotlights** highlighting innovative national practices that can inform cross-regional collaboration.
- The presentation of a **Terms of Reference** capturing shared priorities and areas for cooperation.
- Agreement to **convene a high-level follow-up conference in Rome in 2026** to review progress, scale efforts, and expand partnerships.

Framing the Discussions

The event will open with remarks and keynote addresses that underscore the shared responsibility to reimagine cancer care through collaboration. Building on the Cairo Declaration, the focus will shift toward practical next steps: aligning strategies, exchanging expertise, and strengthening systems that can respond equitably to rising cancer burdens.

Key areas of discussion include:

- Scaling **population-based screening programs** and early detection efforts.
- Enhancing access to **digital diagnostics**, including liquid biopsy and AI-enabled platforms.
- Investing in **healthcare workforce development**, particularly in under-resourced and fragile settings.
- Advancing **digital health ecosystems** that enable precision care and regional data-sharing.

Concluding with Action

The event will close with a forward-looking session to present and adopt a **Terms of Reference**, formalizing the areas of focus and mechanisms for ongoing coordination. These conclusions will guide collective work in the year ahead and serve as a framework for the 2026 MENA–EU Cancer Partnership Conference in Rome.

As a first and symbolic act of this new cooperation, a **pilot partnership agreement** will be signed between the **Egyptian Cancer Society** and the **Italian Alliance Against Cancer**. This signing marks the beginning of a practical, results-oriented partnership—demonstrating that coordinated efforts across regions can lead to improved outcomes, reduced inequalities, and sustainable change.

When cancer knows no borders, neither should our response.

09:30 – 10:10 CET: Welcome

Setting the Scene:

- **Joint Remarks:**

- **Prof. Ruggero de Maria**, *President, Alliance Against Cancer*
- **Prof. Hesham Elghazaly**, *President, Egyptian Cancer Society*

Keynote Addresses:

- **Giovanni Leonardi**, *Director of the Department of One Health and International Affairs of the Ministry of Health*
- **Ahmed Hassan Fahal**, *Assistant Secretary General of the Scientific Research Council, Arab League*
- **Prof. Marcel Tanner**, *President International Cancer Patient Coalition*

10:10 – 10:30 CET: Moderator: Context, Objectives & Outcomes

- **Khalid Bin Jabor Al-Thani**, *Chair, Qatar Cancer Society*
- **Prof. Denis Horgan**, *Secretary General, International Cancer Patient Coalition*

10:30 – 11.50 CET: Partner Centre Spotlights

Algeria: **Adda Bounedjar**, *Chairman, Medical Oncology Department, CHU Frantz Fanon Blida, Algeria*

Italy: **Giuseppe Curigliano**, *President-Elect of the European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO)*

BBMRI: **Johanna Kostenzer**, *Deputy Head of Public Affairs at BBMRI-ERIC*

Belgium: **Marc Van den Bulcke**, *Head of Service, Cancer Centre, Sciensano, Belgium*

Emirates: **Aisha Al Mulla**, *Director Of Friends Of Cancer Patients*

Oman: **Dr. Manal Al-Zadjali**, *Secretary General of Oman Cancer Association*

Qatar: **Hadi Mohamad Abu Rasheed**, *Head of the Professional Development and Research Department, Qatar Cancer Society*

Network of Expertise: **Paolo Casali**, *Director of the Medical Oncology Unit 2 at the Istituto Nazionale Tumori, Milan, Italy*

Bulgaria: **Jasmina Koeva**, *President, Bulgarian Alliance for Personalised & Precision Medicine*

Egypt: **Prof. Hesham Elghazaly**, *President, Egyptian Cancer Society*

11:50 – 12:00 CET: Closing and Next steps

- **Prof. Ruggero de Maria**, *President, Alliance Against Cancer* & **Paolo Marchetti**, *Full Professor of Medical Oncology Sapienza University of Rome*
- **Prof. Hesham Elghazaly**, *President, Egyptian Cancer Society*
- **Prof. Denis Horgan**, *Secretary General, International Cancer Patient Coalition*

12.00 12.15 CET: Signing Ceremony
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