

AGENDA

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

09.15 – 13:00 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.

Programme

09:15 – 09.45 CET: Welcome

Setting the Scene:

- **Joint Remarks:**
 - **Prof. Ruggero de Maria**, *President, Alliance Against Cancer*
 - **Prof. Hesham Elghazaly**, *President, Egyptian Cancer Society*
 - **Paolo Marchetti**, *Scientific Director of IDI IRCCS, Rome*

Keynote Addresses:

- **Giovanni Leonardi**, *Director of the Department of One Health and International Affairs of the Ministry of Health*

09:45 – 10:00 CET: Moderator: Context, Objectives & Outcomes

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

10:00 – 12.30 CET: PARTNER CENTRE SPOTLIGHTS

10.00 – 11.00 Sub-Session 1: "Cutting-Edge Collaborations: Merging MENA & EU Innovations

True progress happens when global expertise converges. This session brings together pioneering minds from both MENA and EU regions to showcase how collaborative innovation is accelerating cancer care. From digital pathology networks to shared biobanking initiatives, discover how cross-border partnerships are creating solutions greater than the sum of their parts.

Saudi Arabia

Suad Bin Amer, *Survivor & Founder of ZAHRA*
Hanadi Alouthah, *CEO at Zahra Breast Cancer Association.*

Italy

Giuseppe Curigliano, *President-Elect, European Society for Medical Oncology*

Austria

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

Oman

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

Belgium

Marc Van den Bulcke, *Head of Cancer Centre, Sciensano*

Emirates

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

Italy

Paolo Casali, *Director of Medical Oncology Unit 2, Istituto Nazionale Tumori*

Q&A

11:00 – 11.30 CET: Coffee break

11.30 – 12.30 Sub-Session 2: "From Policy to Practice: Implementing Equitable Cancer Care"

The best policies remain theoretical without effective implementation. This session highlights practical strategies turning commitments into real-world impact across diverse healthcare landscapes. Hear how leaders are adapting global best practices to local contexts, building workforce capacity, and ensuring innovations reach the patients who need them most.

Algeria

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

Tunisia

Hanan Mhirsi, *Vice President, Nourane Cancer Association*

Bulgaria

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

Qatar

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

Morocco

Maria Bennani, *Director, Fondation Lalla Salma - Prévention et traitement des cancers*

Egypt

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

Q&A

12.30 – 12:45 CET: Closing and Next steps
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- **Prof. Ruggero de Maria**, *President, Alliance Against Cancer*
- **Khalid Bin Jabor Al-Thani**, *Chair, Qatar Cancer Society*
- **Prof. Denis Horgan**, *Secretary General, International Cancer Patient Coalition*

12.45 - 13.00 CET: Signing Ceremony
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