



## **Statement by the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC)**

### **68<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly: Agenda Item 17.1 Strengthening emergency and essential surgical care and anaesthesia as a component of universal health coverage**

Thank you for the opportunity to deliver this statement on behalf of the Union for International Cancer Control – representing 800 member organisations across 155 countries.

In cancer, surgery is the primary modality for the control of solid tumours, a necessary component of curative therapy and vital in many palliative settings. Over 71% of patients will need a surgical procedure at some point in their treatment. Improving surgery capacity is therefore a major contribution to reducing the 8.2 million cancer deaths annually and associated suffering.

UICC welcomes this resolution, and congratulates Member States on their commitment to integrating essential surgery services at the primary healthcare level to address shortfalls in provision of safe, affordable and equitable cancer surgery, with over 6 billion people globally still unable to access basic cancer procedures. We particularly highlight the critical importance of:

- 1) Regular monitoring and evaluation of surgical care capacity of healthcare facilities, and collection of case log data, in order to identify unmet infrastructural, human resources and training needs.
- 2) Development of reliable measures, benchmarking and reporting for access to and safety of surgery; we believe there is value in a WHO Global Status Report on this issue ahead of the 2017 WHA Progress Report.
- 3) Adequate resourcing of the Secretariat to support Member States in line with the proposed programme budget 2016-17 and the 12<sup>th</sup> General Programme of Work (2014-2019).

In support of the above, we draw attention to the Lancet Oncology Commission on Global Cancer Surgery to be launched in September 2015, which will critically examine the state of global cancer surgery with over 400 different procedures, and identify gaps and opportunities to drive improvements in cancer surgery research, education and systems of care within a wider platform of strengthening surgical systems in an affordable manner through public systems.

Thank you.