

**PETITION FROM AFRICAN YOUTHS WITH EPILEPSY**

**&**

**THEIR FRIENDS**

**TO: MINISTERS OF HEALTH & PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES OF HEALTH ACROSS AFRICA**

20th October, 2020

We the youths with epilepsy from Africa and our friends gathered here in a virtual meeting on the 20th of October, 2020 would like to send this petition to you Honorable Ministers of Health and Parliamentary Committees on Health, so that you can realize the need for you to support and endorse **the World Health Assembly Resolution 68.20 onGlobal Action on Epilepsy and Its Synergies with Other Neurological Disorders**during the 73rd World Health Assembly**.**

Epilepsy is one of the major brain disorders thought to affect more than 10 millions Africans. Sometimes called a seizure disorder, epilepsy is a chronic medical condition produced by a temporary change in the electrical function of the brain, causing seizures which affect awareness, movement or sensation. The disorder affects people in all nations and of all races. Left untreated, like any other disease, it could impede the social development of the patient.

Treatment for epilepsy is available, effective and cheap. Indeed, it is estimated that 70 per cent of patients could lead normal lives if properly treated. The cost of the anti-epileptic drug, phenobarbitone, which alone can control seizures in a substantial proportion of those with epilepsy, could be as low as US$5 per annum. Yet, in Africa up to 80 per cent of people suffering from epilepsy do not receive treatment at all.

This is due to a number of factors, principal among which are: insufficient information about the disease, including the myths and superstition surrounding it; the social and cultural stigma that attach to the disease, and inadequate performance of health systems.

One of the outcomes of GCAE in the African Region is the African Declaration on epilepsy adopted at the meeting on Epilepsy: a Health care priority in Africa held from 5 to 6 May 2000 in Dakar, Senegal, the Declaration proclaimed epilepsy as a health priority in Africa and called for public health measures to improve its treatment and raise professional and public awareness so as to could counter ill-informed attitudes.

The WHA68.20 resolution urges Member States to address the global burden of epilepsy and the need for coordinated action at the country level to address its health, social and public knowledge implications and requested WHO to provide technical support for epilepsy management, especially to countries with the lowest access to services and resources where the burden of epilepsy is greatest. As Africa this is what we need !!!!!!!

**Specific Request**

1. That Ministers of Health and Parliamentary Committees on Health support and endorse the World Health Assembly Resolution 68.20 on **Global Action on Epilepsy and Its Synergies with Other Neurological Disorders** in the coming 73rd WHA Assembly.

**Supportive Request**

At National Level there be the following:

1. Involvement of persons with epilepsy in the initial planning of programmes which affect our lives.
2. Creation and implementation of plans and programs which are tangible and can change in our lives
3. As Governments, ensure that epilepsy is mainstreamed across all health and development initiatives and ensure implementation of policies that protect our rights

Signed by:

1. **AMAPE** Mozambique
2. **Cameroon**: Association Cameroun aise contre L’Epilepsie,
3. **Cameroon**: Community Development and Epilepsy Foundation
4. **Congo**, DR: Mhcd Centre for the Prevention and Treatment of Epilepsy
5. **DRC** - Aslek
6. **Ethiopia**: Epilepsy Support Association Of Ethiopia
7. **Gambia**: Gambia Epilepsy Association
8. **Ghana**: Ghana Epilepsy Association
9. **Kenya** Foundation for People with Epilepsy
10. **Kenya**: Kenya Association for the Welfare of People with Epilepsy (KAWE
11. **Lesotho**: Epilepsy Lesotho
12. **Malawi**: Malawi Epilepsy Association.
13. **Mauritius**: EDYCS Epilepsy Group
14. **Namibia**: Epilepsy Namibia
15. **Niger**: LNCEMNMC,
16. **Nigeria**: Epilepsy Association of Nigeria
17. **Rwanda**: Global Epileptic Connection (GECO
18. **Senegal**: Ligue Senegal aise contre L’Epilepsie
19. **Sierra Leone**: Epilepsy Association of Sierra Leone
20. **South Africa**: Epilepsy South Africa
21. **Swaziland**: Swaziland Epilepsy Organization
22. **Tanzania**, United Republic of: Parents Organisation for Children with Epilepsy (POCET),
23. **Togo**: Clinique de l’Epilepsie
24. Uganda Purple Bench Initiative – Uganda Contact
25. **Uganda**: Epilepsy Support Association Uganda (ESAU)
26. **Zambia**: Epilepsy Association of Zambia
27. **Zimbabwe**: Epilepsy Support Foundation