

Statements of the Director General

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World Cancer Day 2008

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IAEA Supports World Cancer Day

by IAEA Director General Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei

Cancer can strike anyone at anytime, young or old, rich or poor. It knows no borders. World Cancer Day, on 4 February, was initiated to raise global awareness of cancer issues and stimulate new strategies and thinking to combat the killer disease.

Nowhere is the need greater than in the developing world, where millions of people are suffering and dying due to lack of cancer prevention and treatment. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), 84 million people will die of cancer in the next 10 years, more than 70 % of them in low-income countries, unless action is taken now. The IAEA's Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT) was created to help poorer countries confront the growing cancer crisis by integrating radiotherapy into comprehensive cancer control programmes.

As it celebrates its third birthday on World Cancer Day, PACT can claim significant progress in building effective relationships with a broad array of stakeholders, initiating six pilot projects and gaining increasing support from Member States.

The IAEA commends all organizations, agencies and individuals engaged in the battle to defeat this dreadful disease. We look forward to continued collaboration with international partners to help bring hope to cancer patients, to relieve their suffering and to save lives.

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