

# INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE AGAINST EPILEPSY

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## RE: World Health Assembly Resolution on Epilepsy

Dear ILAE and IBE Chapter President and Board Members,

This letter follows a similar request for your attention and assistance that has been sent to you recently by the ILAE or IBE Chair of your region. With this correspondence and the **accompanying video message** we aim to provide you with **additional information** to assist you in your engagement with your government.

As you are aware, in January of this year the Executive Board of the World Health Organization adopted a **draft Decision on Epilepsy**, a copy of which is attached for your information. The decision was supported by more than 80 Member States (governments) and an unprecedented level of co-sponsorship by 37 different countries. The attached report provides details of supporting countries that you may find useful for your reference.

As a result of the successful Executive Board meeting earlier this year, a draft **resolution on “Epilepsy and Its Synergies with Other Neurological Disorders”** will be presented at the next World Health Assembly for consideration and hopefully also adoption.

The next World Health Assembly - an annual event which is attended by all Ministers of Health - is likely to take place virtually in **November this year**. However, consultations on the draft resolution to gain input and support from different governments is likely to start at the **end of September**.

Important for our collective work, the draft epilepsy resolution calls for the development of an **Intersectoral Global Action Plan for Epilepsy and its Synergies with Other Neurological Disorders** outlining relevant multi-sector intervention pathways for government action and clear targets that all government would commit to. An Intersectoral Global Action Plan would provide us, health professionals and advocates for people living with epilepsy, a way to more effectively work with our governments on closing the treatment and inclusion gaps for people living with epilepsy as well as improve prevention and expand research.

**It is essential that we gain support from your government for the resolution ideally before as well as throughout the consultations that will begin later this month.**

The attached video provides more details on the ways to engage to ensure that your government is aware of and willing to support the draft resolution on **“Epilepsy and Its Synergies with Other Neurological Disorders”**. [Watch video](#)

In short, we would very much welcome it if you as Chapter Leaders could:

- Make contact with your Ministry of Health and/or Ministry of Foreign Affairs (the unit or units that are responsible for relationships with WHO) to ensure that they are aware that there will be a resolution on **“Epilepsy and Its Synergies with**

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**Other Neurological Disorders”** for discussion at the next World Health Assembly

- Seek support for the resolution from your government using information from the **Global Epilepsy Report** (attached for ease of reference) to emphasize the burden of epilepsy, current treatment gaps but also – importantly – the highly treatable nature of epilepsy and the cost effectiveness of anti-seizure medicines
- Ensure that your government is aware of the importance of the **inclusion of the word ‘epilepsy’ in the title of the resolution**. If the resolution becomes too broad and focuses on all neurological conditions, epilepsy is likely to once again be de-prioritized or indeed ignored in any action plan. Likewise, it is essential that the word epilepsy appears in the operative **description of the “Intersectoral Global Action Plan”**. You may find it useful to ensure that your government representatives are aware that WHO in the Global Epilepsy Report repeatedly classify epilepsy as a **‘public health imperative’** – one of only a handful of conditions classified as such due to the high level of avoidable mortality and morbidity as well as historically very low levels of investment in most countries of the world in care, treatment and research.
- **In-country ILAE and IBE leaders** work together to ensure optimal coordination and develop a common strategy for engagement with your government
- Please inform Gus Egan [gegan@ilae.org](mailto:gegan@ilae.org) if you are holding consultations with your government so that we can keep track of the progress globally.

If you have any query, please feel free to contact us (Sam Wiebe: [swiebe@ucalgary.ca](mailto:swiebe@ucalgary.ca) and Alla Guekht: [guekht@gmail.com](mailto:guekht@gmail.com) ). We are very much looking forward to hearing from you soon.

**Your help is essential.**

Kindest regards,



Samuel Wiebe  
ILAE President



Martin Brodie  
IBE President