



IAPO Intervention: Framework of engagement with non-state actors (item 6c), 61st Session of the World Health Organization's Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean

Thank you Chair,
Honourable members and distinguished delegates.

The International Alliance of Patients' Organizations (IAPO) is an alliance of patient groups representing the interests of patients worldwide. We have almost 250 member organizations in over 65 countries, representing around 365 million patients with a wide range of conditions.

IAPO supports activities to strengthen engagement with non-state actors and improve transparency and accountability. We are interested in progress on the Framework of engagement with non-state actors since the World Health Assembly and Executive Board.

We fully agree that non-state actors play a major role in all aspects of global health and welcome WHO's assertion that non-state actors are essential in helping WHO fulfil its mandate of health for all. All healthcare policies that change services can affect service users – patients – and they therefore should be involved in all healthcare decision-making.

We assert the fundamental importance of understanding and respecting the added value NGOs bring to collaborations with WHO. It is important that WHO ensures the legitimacy and credibility of non-state actors it engages with. The framework should provide consistent and appropriate criteria, and methods for effective engagement, by all non-state actors.

All eligible non-state actors must have the opportunity to participate in WHO activities equally and without prejudice. Publishing clear and openly disseminated details about WHO's engagement, including timelines and papers for consultations and meetings will facilitate effective participation by ensuring access to documents and sufficient time to respond.

IAPO continues to work closely with WHO and all stakeholders to achieve health for all.

Thank you for your attention.