

# The Sixth International Conference on Mycetoma

## The Khartoum Call for Action

1. Mycetoma is a neglected tropical disease, characterized by disabling deformities and associated with severe morbidity and increased mortality. Like other neglected tropical diseases, mycetoma mainly affects populations of low-income status; in such settings the disease has serious medical, health and socioeconomic impacts on patients, families, communities and health systems.
2. There is an urgent need to broaden access to currently available diagnostics and medicines; and to invest in research for better medicines and improved diagnostic tests that can be used in the field and within the primary health-care system.
3. There is a need to elucidate the epidemiology and transmission of the disease and to assess its global burden in order to develop appropriate preventive measures. Currently, control measures rely heavily on early detection and treatment.

### **Recognizing the above, we, the participants in the Sixth International Conference on mycetoma**

#### **Taking into account:**

- Resolution WHA69.21 on addressing the burden of mycetoma, adopted by the Sixty-ninth World Health Assembly in 2016, which recognizes mycetoma as a neglected tropical disease;
- United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 1 (SDG1: End poverty);
- United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG3: Good health and well-being); notably
  - Target 3.3 (By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases); and
  - Target 3.8 (Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all).

#### **Concerned about:**

- The suffering that mycetoma imposes on affected communities, particularly on young adults, women and children and its impact on their health and livelihood;
- The large knowledge gap on mycetoma, including its burden, epidemiology and pathogenesis;
- The absence of a coordinated, public health approach to address the burden of mycetoma;
- The lack of simple, reliable and inexpensive diagnostic tests and limited research and development to address this issue;
- The absence of effective, affordable, accessible and safe medicines and limited research and development to address this issue;

**Hereby confirm** our determination to take every available opportunity and necessary action to ease the human suffering associated with mycetoma and to contribute to the further improvement in knowledge about the disease and its impact;

**Commit** to strengthening global resolve in addressing the burden of mycetoma as called for in World Health Assembly Resolution WHA69.21;

**Call on** Member States of the World Health Organization, bilateral and multilateral agencies, donors, development banks, nongovernmental organizations, foundations, research institutions, pharmaceutical companies and all interested parties to:

- Raise awareness and recognition of mycetoma and its public-health significance globally;
- Engage donor agencies, partners, nongovernmental organizations and all relevant actors to assess the global burden of mycetoma and to support countries in reducing its impact on affected populations;
- Promote consensus towards public health strategies and encourage collaborative research and development on mycetoma;
- Integrate mycetoma interventions with existing public health programmes, including primary health care, surveillance and interventions targeting diseases that manifest primarily on the skin, in line with other universal health coverage initiatives;
- Engage industry and relevant partners to allow sustained access to diagnostics and medicines through donation programmes and negotiated pricing policies;

We express our gratitude to the Government and People of Sudan for hosting the Sixth International Conference on Mycetoma.

**Khartoum, Sudan  
15 February 2019**