4 February 2019 – Each year on 4 February, World Cancer Day is celebrated as an opportunity to commemorate, raise awareness and rally everyone – governments, civil society, individuals and the international community – to end the injustice of preventable suffering from cancer.

Organized by the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC), a nongovernmental organization partner with the World Health Organization, the year 2019 marks the launch of the new ‘I Am and I Will’ campaign. This 3-year campaign is a global call to action to empower everyone to take on a personal commitment and to demonstrate the power of individual action to impact the future.

“The global cancer burden remains one of the most urgent health issues we face today. This World Cancer Day, we are underscoring the importance of personal and collective actions taken today which can dramatically improve the early detection of cancer and help to save millions of lives,” says HRH Princess Dina Mired of Jordan, the current UICC President.

WHO provides guidance on how to address the cancer burden through comprehensive cancer control, founded on global coordination and strong health systems to achieve universal health coverage. Collaboration across sectors is critical to produce a stronger response at the primary health care level against this disease that needlessly claims the lives of millions of people around the world each year.

In 2018, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) estimated the global cancer burden to have risen to 18.1 million new cases and 9.6 million deaths. One in 5 men and one in 6 women worldwide develop cancer during their lifetime; one in 8 men and one in 11 women eventually die from the disease. Worldwide, there are an estimated 44 million people who are alive within 5 years of a cancer diagnosis, called the 5-year prevalence.

The Middle East is one of the most affected regions in the world. In Jordan, cancer is the second leading cause of death. The Jordan Cancer Registry established in 1996 is mandated to collect data on cancer cases to help identify trends and ultimately improve care for patients fighting cancer. Producing reports on a regular basis since, the registry helps improving evidence-based decision-making. According to its 2015 report, close to 8400 new cancer cases were registered in Jordan in that year alone; more than half of them were among women.

However, there is also reason for hope. Health care for cancer patients has improved substantially in the last years. Today, Jordan is considered a regional center for excellence for cancer health care, offering all Jordanians access to free quality cancer care.

On World Cancer Day, WHO and its partners acknowledge the role of all stakeholders in strengthening health systems everywhere to coordinate and ensure effective patient-centred cancer control and healthy lives for all.

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International Agency for Research on Cancer

International Association of Cancer Registries

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