

# 2019 Governments in Action Report



**World  
Cancer Day**  
4 February

[worldcancerday.org](http://worldcancerday.org)





# Παγκόσμια Ημέρα

# κατά του Καρκίνου 2019

ΥΠΟ ΤΗΝ ΑΙΓΙΔΑ

ΤΗΣ Α.Ε. ΤΟΥ ΠΡΟΕΔΡΟΥ ΤΗΣ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑΣ  
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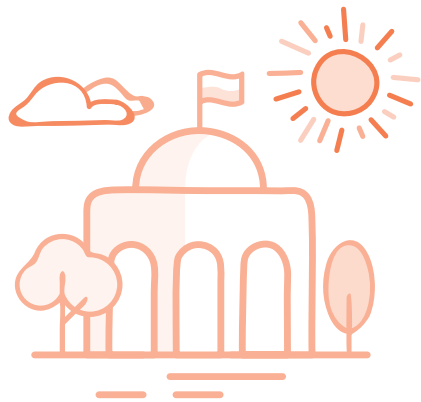
World  
Cancer Day  
4 February

Commissioner of European Union Mr. Vytenis Andriukaitis (Health & food safety) speaks at the World Cancer Day event hosted by the Hellenic Cancer Society.



# Incredible support

In 2019, we witnessed the world's governments respond to World Cancer Day with strengthened commitment and support.



The show of leadership was seen everywhere: in Parliament, in community and town halls, in city streets, in the press and on social media.

In total 62 governments seized the opportunity of World Cancer Day to raise awareness, make a commitment, engage in discussion and debate, bring communities together, honour individuals and organisations making a difference and unify the nation around one of the most critical health issues.

We recognise that when leaders speak up and take action, we are in a better position to accelerate progress towards a world less burdened by cancer. This report takes a closer look at some of the impactful actions that governments around the world took this past 4 February.



## Participating governments:

Afghanistan	Ghana	Malta	Spain
Australia	Greece	Mauritius	South Africa
Belize	Guatemala	Myanmar	Sweden
Bolivia	Honduras	New Zealand	The Netherlands
Brazil	Hong Kong	Pakistan	Tobago
Brunei Darussalam	India	Paraguay	Trinidad
Canada	Iran	Peru	Turkey
Cayman Islands	Israel	Philippines	Uganda
Chile	Italy	Poland	United Kingdom
Colombia	Jamaica	Portugal	United States
Croatia	Jordan	Rwanda	Uruguay
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Latvia	Saint Lucia	The Virgin Islands
France	Lebanon	Samoa	Zambia
Georgia	Luxembourg	Saudi Arabia	Zimbabwe
Germany	North Macedonia	Scotland	
	Maldives	Seychelles	
	Malaysia	Sierra Leone	



**Governments have  
the power to help  
move nations  
towards a healthier,  
brighter future.**





# Americas

## Canada

“The theme of this year’s World Cancer Day is “I Am and I Will”. As the Minister of Health, I will continue to take action and fight against cancer. I encourage you to join the movement as well.”

The Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Health

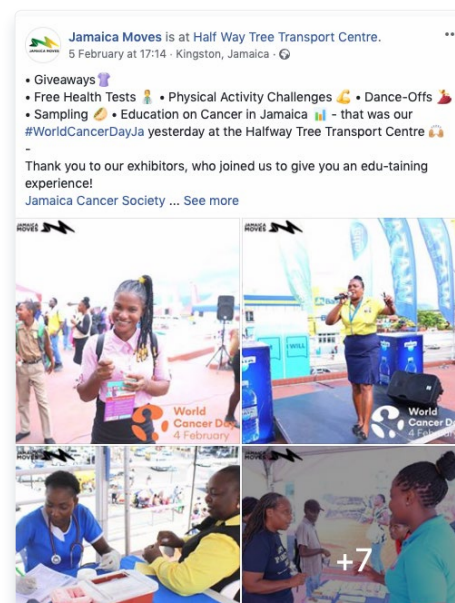
## Brazil



## Jamaica

### Jamaica gets moving

In the Caribbean island nation, the Jamaica Moves campaign - a coordinated response from the Health Ministry and its partners to get more people active - used World Cancer Day to help the nation focus on their health. The activities brought together the whole community to learn more about cancer, to access free health tests, and to participate in physical activity challenges – including a dance-off.



## Peru

### Peru’s Ministry of Health uses the power of social media

Peru’s Ministry of Health adopted the ‘I Am and I Will’ theme in their social media messaging, sharing survivor stories, and encouraging women to take part in national screening programmes. The Ministry also organised for young children living with cancer to meet their football heroes from first division football club, Club Alianza Lima.



## United States



## Uruguay

### Minister of Health calls for strengthened collective efforts

The Uruguayan Minister for Public Health called a press conference on the occasion of World Cancer Day highlighting the nation’s achievement in reducing cancer mortality rates. Minister Basso stressed the importance of early detection and seeking treatment earlier as part of the nation’s plan to strengthen collective efforts between the health system and health institutions around cancer.



# Europe

## Croatia

### World Cancer Day kicks off National Cancer Week

World Cancer Day in Croatia also coincides with the country's National Cancer Week. In a press conference on World Cancer Day, Croatia's Health Minister, Milan Kujundžić confirmed that "fighting cancer" is a top government priority. The government has already included a national cancer plan as part of the government's reform plan, which aims to save thousands of lives through improving prevention and early detection, screening rates and early diagnosis.

## France

### UICC member, the French National Cancer Institute join forces with the government

On 4 February at the Palais Brongniart in Paris, the Minister of Solidarity and Health, Agnès Buzyn, addressed a roomful of health experts and leaders at the 7th annual meeting by UICC member, the French National Cancer Institute. In her speech, Minister Buzyn reflected on the past progress that had been made – highlighting the significant reduction in the number of smokers, with particular success in engaging with individuals less engaged with the health system, the rollout of a national screening programs for cervical cancer, and a boost to the nursing oncology profession with the introduction of a formal state diploma. The Minister also looked forward to the creation of the next three-year 2020-2022 national cancer plan – one which will be a model of progress and coordination – and used the occasion to call for greater collaboration across Europe for continued action.



## Germany





# Europe

## Greece

### In partnership with UICC member, the Hellenic Cancer Society

A full programme of activities across Greece was organised by The Hellenic Cancer Society (HCS) in collaboration with their members and partners. The main event gathered hundreds of distinguished guests for high level discussions, including speakers: the President of the Hellenic Republic, Mr Prokopios Pavlopoulos, the Minister for Health, the General Secretary of the European Network of Smoking & Tobacco Prevention, as well as the EU Commissioner for Health and Food Safety. In his presentation, Health Minister Mr Xanthos spoke in-depth about the actions already undertaken by his Ministry as part of the National Strategy for the Prevention and Control of Cancer, including addressing patients' day-to-day challenges, access to diagnosis, treatment and pain relief and a focus on improving quality of life. The Minister also looked ahead to future plans, highlighting

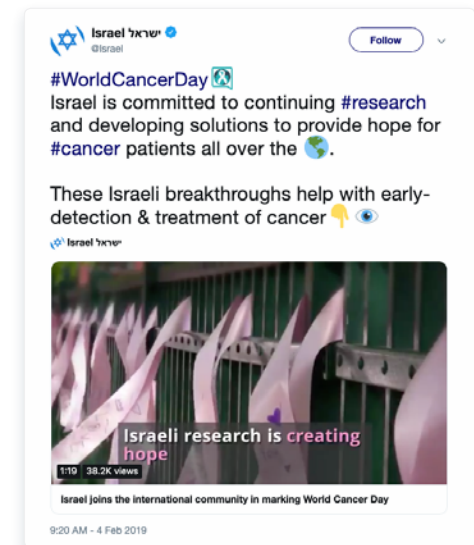
the development of a national plan focused on prevention and population-based screening and emphasised the government's objectives of access for all to medicines, strengthening the healthcare workforce and investing in strengthening the public healthcare system.

The event was attended by HCS President, Mr. E. Filopoulos and other dignitaries including Mr. Kyriakos Mitsotakis, Opposition Leader who called for enhancements to existing policies on cancer prevention and Mrs. M. Vardinoyannis, Goodwill Ambassador of UNESCO who outlined the recent progress made in childhood cancer. The event concluded with a round table discussion presided by Director of the Public Health Institute, Professor Behrakis, on the developments in prevention and diagnosis with discussions particularly focused around passive smoking.

## Israel

### UICC member, the Israel Cancer Association and Health Ministry presents latest national cancer data

On the eve of World Cancer Day, the Health Ministry and the Israel Cancer Association jointly released the latest national cancer data. The data presented good news in parts, showing that cancer cases had decreased over the last twenty years, most significantly within men. However, the data also reflected a near doubling of cases among Arab women. The data also brought attention to the significant risk factors affecting young Israelis, including tanning beds, HPV, obesity and smoking.







# Europe

## Italy

**In partnership with UICC member, the Istituto Nazionale Tumori Regina Elena**

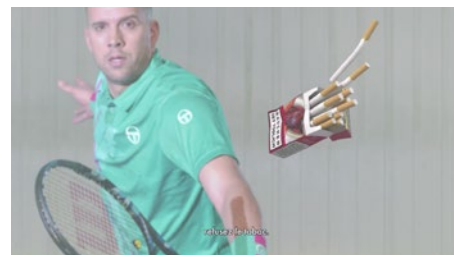
For the very first time, the Minister of Health, Giulia Grillo joined leading national cancer organisations, Ufficio Stampa e Relazioni Esterne IFO, the Istituto Nazionale Tumori Regina Elena and the San Gallicano Institute together with the public to witness the lighting of the Fountain of the Four Rivers in the heart of Rome. The action launched a strong message by the government of its commitment to working together to defeat cancer and was covered widely by the media.



## Luxembourg

**Awareness campaign launches with tennis ambassador**

To mark the occasion of World Cancer Day, the Minister of Health of Luxembourg in partnership with the National Cancer Foundation launched a new awareness raising campaign focused on healthy behaviours. Through a video, the campaign ambassador and tennis hero, Gilles Muller, helped to spotlight the importance of prevention and early detection. The campaign is supported through a series of free services offered by the Cancer Foundation, including online resources to quit smoking and to get more physically active. In the weeks following World Cancer Day, the Foundation will also rollout a cancer in the workplace initiative for companies.



– Gilles Muller campaigns for cancer prevention and early detection in a video by the National Cancer Foundation launched on World Cancer Day

## North Macedonia



## Malta

**Malta's leaders display act of unity for World Cancer Day**

Malta's highest political leaders championed World Cancer Day in a show of unity by bringing together health experts around Europe for the fourth annual conference organised by the National Cancer Platform Association. President Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca delivered the welcoming speech, confirming political will and commitment to strengthen efforts around cancer. The President also called for a more holistic response to cancer treatment and management as the National Cancer Platform Association works with civil society to deliver the National Strategy Against Cancer.



# Europe

## Poland

### Draft bill of National Oncology Strategy presented by the President

At a World Cancer Day seminar, "Together for Oncology," Poland's President invited a discussion on cancer planning and National Cancer Control Plans with leading experts from the Ministry of Health, the scientific community, civil society, doctors and journalists. The President also presented the draft bill for a National Oncology Strategy which is expected to be completed in September 2019.



## Spain



## Turkey

### Turkish Minister of Health speaks at WHO meeting

During the national activities for World Cancer Day, Deputy Minister of Health, Prof. Dr. Emine Alpe Meşe, led a discussion on the national prevention and control programmes, ranging from childhood obesity, maternal and mental health. During the WHO-hosted meeting, discussions focused on the national programme on tobacco prevention, use and control, which is being championed by President Erdoğan.



## United Kingdom

### UK Prime Minister hands out special award on World Cancer Day

On World Cancer Day, Prime Minister May, presented a 'Points of Light' award recognising volunteers who have changed and inspired their communities to Paul Verrico, who has fundraised over half a million pounds in the past five years to support cancer patients and their families with medical and practical assistance.



"It is especially important, on World Cancer Day, to recognise the incredibly positive impact your work is having on so many families across the UK."

Prime Minister Theresa May in a personal letter to 'Points of Light' award recipient Paul Verrico





UICC President HRH Princess Dina Mired with First Lady Mrs Rebecca Akufo-Addo at the World Cancer Day 2019 Commemoration Event in Kumasi, Ghana



# Africa

## Ghana

### UICC member, BCI Ghana hosts First Lady and UICC President

At a special World Cancer Day event attended by UICC President HRH Princess Dina Mired of Jordan, the First Lady of Ghana, Mrs. Rebecca Akufo-Addo, called for everyone to unite in efforts to reduce the growing number of cancer cases in the country. The event held in the city of Kumasi and organised by UICC Member, BCI Ghana, also included an address by the Minister of Health, Mr. Kwaku Agyemang-Manu who confirmed the government's commitment to invest in more equipment and resources for health facilities around the country.

## Kenya

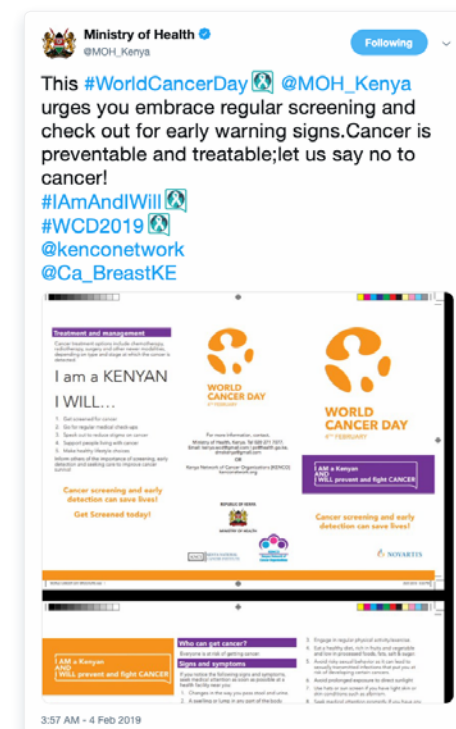
### UICC members, Kenyan Network of Cancer Organizations and the National Cancer Institute of Kenya partner with Ministry of Health for World Cancer Day

Aiming to encourage individuals to get screened and go for regular medical check-ups, the Ministry of Health along with the Kenyan Network of Cancer Organizations, the National Cancer Institute of Kenya, the county government of Meru and corporate partner, Novartis, organised a day-long event filled with educational presentations and screenings. The day focused specifically on encouraging people to recognise the signs and symptoms of cancer, speak out against cancer stigma, support others living with cancer and to make healthy life choices.

“We need to make cancer care in Kenya a national priority”

Ken Okoth, MP

Kenya's MP Ken Okoth also helped to further national dialogue around cancer, choosing to announce his colorectal cancer diagnosis on the eve of World Cancer Day. Minister Okoth used the opportunity to call for greater progress in the implementation of the national cancer strategy, more local access to care, greater investment in human resources, equipment and medicine as well as underscored the importance of a national prevention campaign.







# Africa

## Mauritius

**“World Cancer Day is an opportune time to raise awareness about cancer and to reflect upon Governmental as well as individual actions across the world against the disease.”**

**Minister of Health and Quality of Life, Dr Anwar Husnood.**

**Minister of Health outlines key government initiatives, including construction of new cancer centre, to reduce the national cancer burden**

In a special commemorative event for World Cancer Day, the Minister of Health and Quality of Life reconfirmed the government's determination to improve the quality of patient life, committing to investing in equipment and upgrading facilities to provide better diagnosis, treatment and healthcare. Minister Husnood outlined the government's current initiatives as part of its Prevention Policy,

including a free vaccination program for HPV, awareness campaigns as well as a number of key projects including the construction of a new teaching hospital and a new cancer centre. Following the ceremony, the public took part in free breast and cervical cancer screenings and medical checkups, as well as enjoyed a yoga demonstration and cooking exhibition.

## Rwanda

**Thousands hear from Minister of Health on World Cancer Day**

This year, a national programme of World Cancer Day activities by the Ministry of Health and civil society organisations led a collective raising of awareness through mass participation sporting activities, screenings, and educational sessions. Thousands attended the activities and heard from Minister of Health, Dr Diane Gashumba as she reminded everyone of the power of prevention and early diagnosis.



## Seychelles

**Minister of Health joins World Cancer Day run**

The Cancer Concern Association brought together the community for a World Cancer Day commemoration walk, with the Lions Club, police force and public companies joining citizens in supporting and honouring individuals and families affected by cancer. The Minister of Health addressed the runners, offering the government's support to families and reiterated the government's commitment to developing a national cancer control plan, enhancing screening programmes and ensuring access to cancer treatment without undue financial burden.

**“In the fight against cancer, support and solidarity are the most important elements... With this kind of solidarity we will ensure progress in combating the disease.”**

**Jean-Paul Adam, Minister of Health, Seychelles**



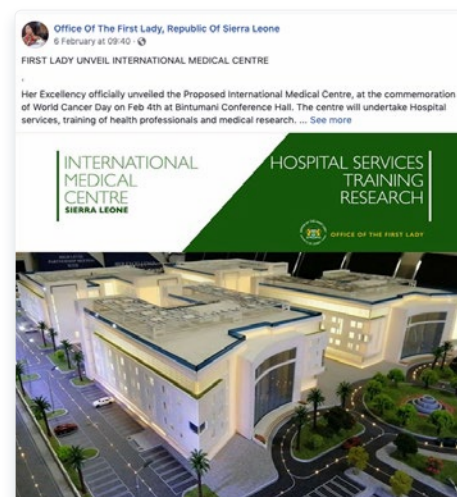
# Africa

## Sierra Leone

### President and First Lady champion World Cancer Day

The President and First Lady of Sierra Leone became the leading voices on World Cancer Day as they delivered official addresses at the Bintumani International Conference before the Ministers and Members of Parliament and key officials. At the conference organised by the First Lady, Mrs Fatima Maada Bio offered a first look at an ambitious concept and plan for an international medical centre. The First Lady also announced funding for training to ten medical professionals as part of a partnership with the Merck Foundation, while stressing the need for continued training to increase local technical expertise, especially in early detection. In his keynote address, President Dr Julius Maada Bio laid out plans on how the new Radiotherapy Cancer Treatment Centre and National Diagnostic Centre will be financed – an estimated investment of

close to 30 million euros. In his closing statement, the President recalled World Cancer Day's theme of 'I Am and I Will', re-emphasising the government's commitment to accelerating progress against cancer and calling for the nation to join in.



## Uganda

### Journalists briefed by Minister of Health

The Minister of State for Health for Primary Health Care, Honourable Dr Joyce Moriku, spoke to a group of journalists ahead of a number of events, including free screenings and a Zumba dance, organised in the country's capital to mark World Cancer Day. Dr Moriku briefed the press on the government initiatives to help tackle cancer, including increased investment to ensure access to cancer medicines, as well as plans to establish a number of regional cancer centres across the country which is expected to serve 20,000 patients, including a new regional centre slated for development in 2019/2020.





# Africa

## Zambia

### **Ministry of Health collaborated with working groups for free screenings**

In the lead up to World Cancer Day, the Ministry of Health launched a number of activities, including cervical cancer screening training for nurses at two new planned clinics, cancer screening for cervical, breast, prostate and retinoblastoma at five locations, as well as more efforts directed at increasing awareness and support and care for patients. Each year, Zambia's Ministry of Health engages multiple working groups across the nation to champion each province's participation in World Cancer Day, with one province nominated to take leadership over the national activities each year.

## Zambia

### **First Lady's Foundation offers free screening for over 200 women**

At a World Cancer Day public event, the First Lady Mrs Auxillia Mnangagwa highlighted the importance of early detection by providing free cervical cancer screenings through her Angel of Hope Foundation mobile screening facility, with over 200 young women screened on the day.

## Spotlight:

### **Open letter to all Ministers of Health across Africa**

The Founder and President of Cures Africa, Dr Chris Cole, wrote an open letter to all Ministers of Health in Africa which was published in a number of media outlets.

The letter, in part, asks Ministers to work towards an approach of “integrative cancer care for improved quality of life and life expectancy” and the importance of “address(ing) Africa’s growing cancer burden”, with special focus on “tackling tobacco and alcohol use, dealing with the current obesity epidemic, performing better at awareness campaigns and providing early screening”.



## South-East Asia

### Brunei Darussalam

#### New national cancer data released on World Cancer Day

To mark World Cancer Day in Brunei, the Ministry of Health released its latest national cancer data. With cancer the number one cause of deaths in the Sultanate, Health Minister Dato Paduka Dr Hj Md Isham Jaafar took the occasion of World Cancer Day to deliver his annual address to the nation. He called for each individual to take more responsibility for their personal health, and emphasised the importance of prevention and early detection to save lives.

### India

#### PM Narendra Modi tweets for World Cancer Day

Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted out his message on World Cancer Day, reiterating the government's commitment to ensuring early detection and affordable cancer treatment, while also using the opportunity to praise the progress being made in cancer research treatment.



### Malaysia



### Maldives





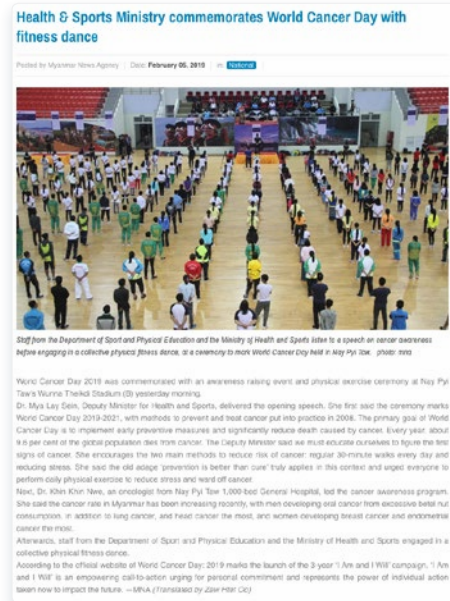


# Eastern Mediterranean

## Myanmar

### Ministry of Health gets physical with collective fitness dance

World Cancer Day was celebrated by the Ministry of Health with a program led by the Nay Pyi Taw General Hospital. Delivering the opening speech in front of staff from the Department of Sport and Physical Education and the Ministry of Health and Sports, Dr Mya Lay Sein, the Deputy Minister for Health and Sports called on each person to reduce their cancer risk through daily physical activity and reducing stress. The highlight of the event included a collective fitness dance by all staff.



## Afghanistan

### National music artist named official ambassador for Cancer Prevention and Control

In Afghanistan, World Cancer Day was marked across the nation including the capital and four provinces. In Kabul, Minister of Public Health, His Excellency Dr Ferozuddin Feroz called on agencies, the ministry and provincial governments to work together in a collaborative effort to prevent cancer as he addressed government representatives, healthcare workers, students, and community members. At the event, the Ministry of Health also announced Ms. Aryana Sayeed, a renowned music artist, as the official Goodwill Ambassador for Cancer Prevention and Control in Afghanistan. The announcement drew the attention of social media, as well as international and national press with the news featured on front pages of a number of national publications.

The Ministry of Public Health further used World Cancer Day as the occasion to launch a new campaign aimed at reducing salt intake among the population. The campaign included a contest which asked people to send in videos of themselves sharing their 'I Am and I Will' commitment to reducing their salt consumption. The winning videos were then voted on by the public.

## Iran

### MAHAK Charity hosts month-long program for World Cancer Day

As part of a World Cancer Day series of activities by the MAHAK Charity, the Iranian National Cancer Network gathered together members, delegates from the Ministry of Health, civil society organisations, as well as businesses to the University of Tehran for an assembly and exhibition.



## Eastern Mediterranean

### Jordan

“Jordan joining this campaign (World Cancer Day) through the lighting up of the Treasury in Petra, is very much in line with the Kingdom’s achievements in the fight against cancer, as well as our efforts in promoting tourism at the same time.”

Majd Shweikeh, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities

### Saudi Arabia



### United Arab Emirates

The UAE government organises car rally, a march and free screenings to raise awareness

In the UAE, the Health Education Department of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs organised a number of awareness raising public events including a talk on cancer and lifestyle behaviours, free screenings, a classic car show, a march in the capital in support of cancer patients as well as an Instagram ‘I Am and I Will’ campaign, featuring key government personalities and celebrities.



– The Treasury, Petra, Jordan lights up for World Cancer Day



# Western Pacific

## Australia

### Minister of Health announces multi-million dollar investment to improve access

On World Cancer Day, Minister for Health Mark Hunt announced that the Australian Government had committed to a multimillion-dollar investment to expand the national MRI program to 50 new MRI licenses. The AUD 375 million investment means greater access for Australians to subsidised life-saving scans for cancer and other medical conditions, signalling the government's continued commitment to improving access and keeping health costs down for individuals and their families.

## New Zealand



## Samoa

### Representatives of Ministry of Health participate in run by UICC member, Samoa Cancer Society

Samoa's Health Minister led the charge in a public 5km World Cancer Day fun run. Around 200 islanders including government officials, seniors, students, sports teams and youth groups joined the run in the early hours of the morning which started with a prayer and warm-up session. The Minister of Health and the Associate Minister of Health joined by the Samoa Cancer Society Chief Executive Officer also took part in a church service for World Cancer Day.

"It is a day to highlight the effects of cancer and to ensure the works that are done in curing those affected, and for everyone to come together..."

Dr Leao Tuitama, Minister of Health, Samoa

## Philippines







# Powerful voices

This World Cancer Day, we have been encouraged by the leadership shown by governments and policy-makers, who have used their platform to shine a powerful light on some of the most critical issues in cancer. We also recognise the efforts of civil society, including UICC members, who work tirelessly to advocate and engage their governments to push forward policies, legislation and investment to reduce the national and global cancer burden.

It has also been inspiring to see so many individuals and communities resolutely speaking up for a better, healthier world and we are filled with hope that these voices are being heard loudly and clearly by their governments.





# Thank **you**

The thousands of small and big acts on World Cancer Day have made a phenomenally powerful impact this year.

Thank you to our UICC members and the wider international cancer community for spreading the word and who do the work every day to create a healthier, brighter future for all.

And, to everyone who believes that a world without cancer is a world worth speaking up for, thank you.

Thank you to our World Cancer Day partners whose financial contribution makes the biggest difference.

## Visionary partners



## Champion partners



For more information and the latest news, sign up to our newsletter at [worldcancerday.org](https://worldcancerday.org)

Have questions? Email us at [hello@worldcancerday.org](mailto:hello@worldcancerday.org)

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