**PRESS RELEASE:** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**ESGO and ENGAGe launch the first-ever World Gynecologic Oncology Awareness Day (World GO Day) on September 20th, 2019**

ESGO-ENGAGe call women in more than 20 countries to **GOfor action** **now** to impact the future – a world without gynecologic cancers!

**Geneva, Switzerland, Sep 16, 2019** – The European Society of Gynaecological Oncology (ESGO) and the European Network of Gynaecological Cancer Advocacy Groups (ENGAGe) will launch on Friday, Sep 20th, 2019 the first-ever World Gynecologic Oncology Day.

This year’s initiative aims to raise awareness and to highlight the risk factors, symptoms, early detection and prevention strategies related to the main types of gynecologic cancers that impact women: cervical, ovarian, uterine, vaginal, and vulvar.

Gynecologic cancers affect approximately 98 thousand women a year in the United States, 58 thousand women are diagnosed with cervical cancer every year in Europe, but the general awareness and consciousness level are still significantly low.

The World GO Day aims to encourage women to get the facts, recognize the signs and take action with the international campaign “GOfor…Awareness, Action, Hope, Life” held simultaneously in more than 20 countries on Sep 20th, 2019.

## “We hope that, in cooperation with other stakeholders and by working closely with advocacy groups and policymakers, we can raise awareness and better support the efforts to promote prevention and early detection of gynecologic cancers. The World Go Day is a joint global effort to improve the survival rate and quality of life for women worldwide” Says Denis Querleu, ESGO president.

**World Go Day Awareness Activities**

To mark the launch of the World GO Awareness Day, on September 20th national sports-related activities will be organized in more than 20 countries with the slogan “A Game Against Cancer” as well as an international digital and social media campaign to drive women to engage with and share gynecologic cancers information.

Esra Ürkmez, Co-Chair of ENGAGe, says “We believe that the initiative of the World Gynecologic Oncology Day on Sep 20th will encourage women to take action, reinforce the local activities and increase the awareness among women for prevention, diagnosis and the best treatment options. ENGAGe calls women to act now for a healthier life”.

“Over 50 cancer advocacy groups in more than 20 countries, pharma companies and international cancer organizations have joined forces with the World Go Day initiative to raise awareness on Sep 20th. Together we can shape the future with “GOfor…Awareness, Action, Hope and Life” – a world with no gynecologic cancers.”. Says Murat Gultekin, Co-Chair of ENGAGe.

Additionally, pictures and messages will be shared online using the hashtag #WorldGODay, to create a global conversation on Gynecologic Cancers, as well as on the official World Go Day website at [www.worldgoday.org](http://www.worldgoday.org/).

**About Gynecologic Cancers**

Over 1.3 million women worldwide were diagnosed with gynecologic cancers in 2018: approx. 44% with cervical cancer, 23% new cases of ovarian cancer, 29% with endometrial cancer and less than 5% were diagnosed with other gynecologic cancers, i.e. vulvar and vagina cancers. Europe accounted for 21% of the new cases in 2018.

468,000 Women worldwide died from gynecologic cancers in 2018.

Cervical cancer accounted for 67% of these cancer cases, approx. 311,000 women lost their lives in 2018.

Gynecologic cancers can be prevented.

Regular screening and examinations, as well as lifestyle choices, can increase the chance of prevention or even early diagnosis of gynecologic cancers when treatment can be more effective, and a complete cure is possible.

Although cervical cancer is preventable and can be cured if diagnosed at an early stage with HPV testing and regular Pap-Smear screening, 7 out of 10 women avoid being examined with the worry of the possibility that they might have the HPV virus.

Ovarian, uterine, cervical and other gynecologic cancers are among the most common cancers affecting women, but the general public awareness of these cancers is still significantly low.

**Cervical Cancer Key Facts & Figures**

* Among cancers affecting women, Cervical Cancer ranks only fourth to breast cancer.
* **It is a preventable disease**, but it accounted in 2018 for **570,000 newly diagnosed cases and 311,000 deaths worldwide**.
* In the EU, every hour, 2 women are losing their lives as a result of Cervical Cancer.
* **Vaccines** against the human papillomavirus (HPV), the primary causative agent of cervical cancers, **are effective against 70%–80%** of all oncogenic HPV types and have a tremendous potential impact for the new generations.
* The uptake rates of cervical cancer **screening methods** to reduce its incidence remain persistently **below 80%** even in developed countries.

ESGO and ENGAGe believe that increasing public awareness of gynecologic cancers prevention will ultimately make a difference in cancer survival rates.

**About ENGAGe**

Established in 2012 by ESGO, the European Network of Gynaecological Cancer Advocacy Groups (ENGAGe) represents advocacy groups of patients affected by all types of gynecologic cancers, from the rarest to the most common, particularly: ovary, endometrial, cervix, vulva and rare cancers.

ENGAGe is the voice of gynecologic cancer patients in Europe.

With over 50 gynecologic cancer advocacy groups in 25 countries, ENGAGe is Europe’s largest network.

**About the ESGO**

ESGO is Europe's foremost organization in gynecologic cancers, dedicated to improving the survival and quality of life of European women with gynecologic (genital and breast) cancers by contributing to the prevention, treatment, and research of gynecologic cancer and the education of healthcare professionals and researchers worldwide.

Since its foundation in 1983, ESGO is a growing not-for-profit organization and forum of more than 2,500 professionals from over 40 countries around the world, leading the way to advancing the highest quality of care for women with gynecologic cancers.

**Acknowledgements**

ESGO and ENGAGe gratefully acknowledge the generous support provided by the following sponsors and supporters of the World GO Day 2019:

AstraZeneca, Merck-Pfizer Alliance, Tesaro – A GSK Company, World Ovarian Cancer Coalition, National Ovarian Cancer Coalition, SHARE, Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance, Ago Austria and Krebshilfe

**Media Contact**

Esra Ürkmez, Co-Chair of ENGAGe

Email: worldgoday@esgo.org