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20 March 2018

Dear Presidents and Official Representatives
of the EPA National Psychiatric Associations (NPAs),

As many of you already know, in 2017 two important reports on “the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health” were prepared by the UN Special Rapporteur, Dainius Puras. Although the main goal of the reports is commendable, they portray psychiatry in a very negative way, as marred by human rights violations, using narrow bio-medically based methods and driven by the pharmaceutical industry.

In her letter to the President of the UN Human Rights Council and the UN Special Rapporteur, the EPA President expressed great concern and disappointment about the potentially harmful false portrayal of psychiatry and psychiatrists in the reports, advocated for substantial revisions and welcomed the opportunity to establish a constructive dialogue. Similar letters were sent by other international organisations, such as WPA, APA, EBC, ICNP, ECNP, and GAMIAN-Europe.

The EPA is also preparing a position paper on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, where it advocates for the interpretation of the Convention on the basis of scientific evidence regarding psychiatry. The position paper will be communicated to the NPAs once published in *European Psychiatry*.

Cooperation and mutual support are crucial in overcoming this difficult situation that our profession is facing. However, we would like to emphasize that this is a very sensitive issue, which should be dealt with very carefully in order to avoid attracting unnecessary attention of the media and anti-psychiatry groups, as the latter would result in a lot of harm to psychiatrist-patient relationship and trust.

We would be very grateful if you could share your opinions on this situation and proposals for possible solutions. We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Prof. Silvana Galderisi
EPA President



Prof. Tamas Kurimay
Chair of the Council of NPAs

Appendices:

1. Report of the UN Special Rapporteur (A/HRC/35/21) from 28 March 2017
2. Report of the UN Special Rapporteur (A/72/137) from 14 July 2017
3. Letter from the EPA President to the President of the UN Human Rights Council and the UN Special Rapporteur from 26 September 2017
4. Letter from WPA
5. Letter from APA
6. Letter from EBC
7. Letter from ICNP
8. Letter from ECNP
9. Letter from GAMIAN-Europe

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