Geneva, 27 January 2017

Statement to the World Health Assembly Executive Board 140/28 Agenda item 10.2

Draft Global Action Plan on the Public Health Response to Dementia 2017-2025

Alzheimer’s Disease International (ADI) welcomes the global action plan on dementia of the World Health Organization (WHO). As the umbrella of national federations of Alzheimer Associations, we stand ready to work with WHO and with national government leadership to bring forth its recommendations into practice and ultimately change lives.

We especially support the development of national government dementia plans, and planning processes that make the effort to have the direct participation of persons living with the disease directly engaged in that planning. We are pleased to see dementia recognized as a human rights issue.

ADI supports the ambitious targets on awareness raising and diagnosis. We recommend that civil society organizations like Alzheimer associations should be involved in these efforts especially in reduction of stigma and creating dementia friendly communities. As active members of the NCD alliance we regret there is not a specific dementia target proposed for risk reduction, for instance a 10% relative decrease of prevalence of dementia.

For area 4, diagnosis, treatment and care, we think the plan would gain from the recommendation that after diagnosis, everyone should receive at least one year post-diagnostic support and access to rehabilitation. This would strengthen the pathways that are mentioned in paragraph 61.

We would urge the WHO Executive Board to identify an appropriate budget and human resources to fulfill the promise of the plan.

Research in treatment including care interventions, prevention and cure is seriously underfunded across the world, especially in proportion to the numbers of persons affected and the cost of dementia. We suggest that WHO could make a stronger call for national governments to increase their investments in research.

We are pleased that this statement is supported by Dementia Alliance International, the self-advocacy group of people living with dementia.