



## News Release

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October 24, 2017

### **MeRck KGaA marks the launch of Merck Foundation during the Fourth edition of Merck Africa Asia Luminary in Cairo, Egypt**

- **Fourth Luminary held in partnership with the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research of Egypt brings together African and Asian countries to from 24<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> October 2017 in Cairo, Egypt contribute towards building healthcare capacity.**
- **“Merck more than a Mother” launched by The First Ladies of Central African Republic, Gambia, Chad, Niger and Republic of Guinea with the aim to empower infertile women in their countries.**
- **More than 450 African healthcare providers, policy makers and researchers from Africa and Asia benefit from several educational and social development sessions.**
- **Winners of Merck Diabetes and Hypertension Awards to be announced.**

After the success of Merck Africa Luminary in Germany, Kenya and Cote d’Ivoire, Merck Foundation, a non-profit company and a subsidiary of Merck KGaA Germany, conducted the Fourth edition of their annual **“Merck Africa Asia Luminary”** on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of October 2017, in partnership with Egypt’s Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Africa Fertility Society and the International Federation of Fertility Societies- IFFS.



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*Prof. Frank Stangenberg-Haverkamp, Chairman of the Executive Board of E. Merck KG, and Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation at the launch of Merck Foundation in Cairo, Egypt on October 24, 2017. From left to right: Hon. Susan Shabangu, Minister in the Presidency Responsible for Women, South Africa; H.E. First Lady of Chad Madame Hinda Deby Itno; H.E. First Lady of the Republic of Guinea Madame Conde Djene; H.E. First Lady of the Republic of Niger Madame Aissata Issoufou Mahamadou; H.E. First Lady of Central African Republic H.E. Madame Brigitte Touadera; H.E. First Lady of Gambia-Madame Fatoumattah Bah-Barrow; Hon. Chairperson of National Council of Namibia, Margaret Mensah-Williams; and Hon. Saffie Lowe Ceesay, Minister of Health, The Gambia.*



*Prof. Frank Stangenberg-Haverkamp, Chairman of the Executive Board and Family Board of E. Merck KG and Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation at the launch of Merck Foundation in Cairo, Egypt on October 24, 2017 with Ministers and Government officials. From left to right: Hon Ngarmbatina Odhimbeye Soukate; Minister of Health, Chad, Hon. Pierre Somse, Minister of Health, Central African Republic (CAR); Hon. Susan Shabangu, Minister in the Presidency Responsible for Women, South Africa; Hon. Saffie Lowe Ceesay, Minister of Health, The Gambia; Hon. Zuliatu Cooper, Minister of Health and Sanitation, Sierra Leone; Hon. Idi Illiassou Mainassara, Minister of Health Republic of Niger; Hon. Julieta Kavetuna, Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services, Namibia; Prof. Hany A. El*



*Shamy, Minister Advisor for African Affairs, Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Arab Republic of Egypt; and Hon. Faustine Engelbert Ndugulile-Deputy Minister of Health, Tanzania .*

Prof. Frank Stangenberg-Haverkamp, Chairman of the Executive Board and Family Board of E.Merck KG emphasized: "Merck is a value driven company, and that is one of the reasons why Merck through its foundation is committed to support the social and economic development of Africa, Asia and developing countries by building healthcare capacity and improving access to innovative and equitable healthcare in the continent."

Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation emphasized: "Merck Foundation brings more than 450 healthcare providers, policy makers, academia and researchers from Africa, Asia and CIS countries to benefit from the valuable educational and social development sessions by top international experts in Diabetes, Fertility, Oncology, Cardiology, Women Health and Research, with the aim of improving disease management, early detection and prevention, build healthcare and research capacity and improve access to innovative and equitable healthcare solutions in developing countries."

"We are very proud to have five First Ladies to inaugurate the Luminary. These very influential women will also be "Merck more than a Mother" champions to empower infertile women through access to information, health and change of mind-set in their respective countries and the rest of Africa," Dr. Kelej added.

### **Key African Ministers to participate in two High Level Panels:**

Two high level panels of Ministers of Health and Gender to discuss the challenges and solutions to improve access to fertility and cancer care will also take place.

The first ministerial high level panel on "**Merck more than a Mother's role in defining interventions to break the stigma around infertility in Africa and Asia,**" will have Hon. Susan Shabangu, Minister in the Presidency Responsible for Women, South Africa; Hon. Betty Amongi, Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, Uganda; Hon. Idi Illassou Mainassara, Minister of Health of Niger; and Hon. Zuliatu Cooper, Minister of Health & Sanitation, Sierra Leone. Others in



the panel will be Prof. Richard Kennedy, President of International Federation of Fertility Societies – IFFS; Prof. Joe Leigh Simpson, past president of IFFS, Prof. Chii-Ruey Tzeng, President of ASPIRE; Prof. Oladapo Ashiru, President of Africa Fertility Society and Dr. Rasha Kelej, Chief Executive Officer of Merck Foundation will chair the panel discussion.

The second ministerial panel on **“The Role of Merck Foundation Together with Governments to improve access to equitable healthcare solutions in Africa and Asia”**, will include Hon. Saffie Lowe Ceesay, Minister of Health, Gambia; Hon. Ngarmbatina Odimbeye Soukate, Minister of Health, Chad; Hon. Pierre Somse, Minister of Health, Central Africa Republic; Hon. Dr. Faustine Engelbert Ndugulile, Deputy Minister of Health, Tanzania; and Hon. Julieta Kavetuna, Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services of Namibia. Others in the panel include President of International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics (FIGO), Prof. Chittaranjan Nalahari Purandare; Prof. Dileep Mhaisekar, Vice Chancellor Maharashtra University of Health Sciences (MUHS) India and Dr. Rasha Kelej, Chief Executive Officer, Merck Foundation will chair the panel.

Healthcare Providers and Academia will also be engaged in an open dialogue to explore the educational gaps with the aim to inform the successful implementation of Merck Diabetes and Hypertension Capacity Advancement Program. In addition to witness the announcement of the winners of the ‘Merck Diabetes and Hypertension Awards’ from across Africa and Asia at the Award Ceremony Dinner.

Over 50 countries are participating including: Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Mozambique, Angola, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia, Congo, Senegal, Cote d’Ivoire, Liberia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Mali, Malawi, Morocco, Tunisia, Sudan, Gambia, Burkina Faso, Niger, Chad, Liberia, Burundi, Mali, Malawi, Equatorial Guinea, Russia, Uzbekistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, U.A.E, Tunisia, India, and Indonesia.

Read more about the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of Merck Africa luminary in Kenya and Cote d’Ivoire respectively.

Merck Africa Luminary in Kenya 2015 - [https://www.merck-foundation.com/MF\\_ArticalDetail?id=a2tw000000NDnK](https://www.merck-foundation.com/MF_ArticalDetail?id=a2tw000000NDnK)



Merck Africa Luminary in Cote D'Ivoire 2016 - [https://www.merck-foundation.com/MF\\_ArticalDetail?id=a2tw000000NDt0](https://www.merck-foundation.com/MF_ArticalDetail?id=a2tw000000NDt0)

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#### **About Merck Foundation**

The [Merck Foundation](http://www.merck-foundation.com), established in 2017, is a philanthropic organization that aims to improve the health and wellbeing of people and advance their lives through science and technology. Our efforts are primarily focused on improving access to innovative healthcare solutions in underserved communities, building healthcare and scientific research capacity and empowering people in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) with a special focus on women and youth. All Merck Foundation press releases are distributed by e-mail at the same time they become available on the Merck Foundation Website. Please go to [www.merck-foundation.com](http://www.merck-foundation.com) to read more and/or register online to interact and exchange experience with our registered members.

Merck Foundation is a subsidiary of Merck KGaA Germany

#### **About Merck**

Merck is a leading science and technology company in healthcare, life science and performance materials. Around 50,000 employees work to further develop technologies that improve and enhance life – from biopharmaceutical therapies to treat cancer or multiple sclerosis, cutting-edge systems for scientific research and production, to liquid crystals for smartphones and LCD televisions. In 2016, Merck generated sales of € 15.0 billion in 66 countries.

Founded in 1668, Merck is the world's oldest pharmaceutical and chemical company. The founding family remains the majority owner of the publicly listed corporate group. Merck holds the global rights to the Merck name and brand. The only exceptions are the United States and Canada, where the company operates as EMD Serono, MilliporeSigma and EMD Performance Materials.