



Brussels, 13 October 2020

## **Medicinal Cannabis Europe calls for a European Parliament resolution on medicinal cannabis**

**Patients experience uneven access to medicinal cannabis throughout Europe. In parallel, the medicinal cannabis industry faces an array of country-specific regulatory frameworks that hamper its development. On 13 October 2020, Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) Frédérique Ries, Alex Agius Saliba and Tilly Metz in collaboration with Medicinal Cannabis Europe addressed viable solutions and called for a European approach on medicinal cannabis. As a next step, Medicinal Cannabis Europe calls on the European Parliament to work on a resolution towards a common European definition of medicinal cannabis, to be also proposed at World Health Organisation (WHO) level.**

The 1961 World Health Organization (WHO) Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs limits the medicinal use of certain classified substances such as cannabis. Yet, evidence prove that medicinal cannabis can be effective against a wide range of diseases and disorders (e.g. multiple sclerosis (MS), epilepsy, fibromyalgia). It is also employed to alleviate pain induced by some treatment methods for various diseases, including cancer.

At present, European Member States enforce different rules for the production, licensing and distribution of high-quality cannabis-based medicines. The fragmentation of the regulatory framework hinders patients' access to the care they need and prevents the development of a truly licensed European medicinal cannabis value chain.

On 13 October, the European Commission, MEPs, the scientific and patients' communities and representatives from the industry gathered for the conference 'towards a European approach on medicinal cannabis'. They discussed the hurdles patients experience to access medicinal cannabis, the gaps that could be filled in research and innovation, and outlined approaches that could be considered relevant for a pan-European approach on medicinal cannabis.

President von der Leyen committed the Commission to address any new Parliament's resolutions with legislative acts, when legislative proposals are requested. Thus, Medicinal Cannabis Europe will continue working with MEPs to initiate and launch a Parliament resolution to pave the way towards a European definition of medicinal cannabis, a first step towards a European approach on medicinal cannabis.

**MEP Frédérique Ries (Vice-President, Renew Europe) stated:** Medicinal cannabis holds an untapped potential. It can improve patients' quality of life by alleviating the pain induced by disorders and treatments. A European approach on medicinal cannabis is crucial for the benefit of patients and the research community whilst ensuring the sound development of a European licensed medicinal cannabis industry.

**Medicinal Cannabis Europe Secretary General Stuart Lambie declared:** Today's conference landmarks the beginning of a new journey for a European approach on medicinal cannabis. Outdated conventions obstruct patients' fair access to medication and jeopardise the establishment of a truly European licensed industry. Europe's dependency on imports makes it vulnerable from third country suppliers, threatening the continuity of supply for patients. Over the coming months, we will continue engaging Members of the European Parliament to facilitate the emergence of a resolution that would step by step bring a paradigm shift at European level.

### **About Medicinal Cannabis Europe**

Launched by Hague Corporate Affairs in 2018, Medicinal Cannabis Europe is the only pan-European multi-stakeholder association which aims to ensure patients' fair access to medicinal cannabis via the definition and establishment of an harmonised legislative framework on medicinal cannabis at European level. Medicinal Cannabis Europe comprises members representing the whole medicinal cannabis value chain: scientific organisations, academia, patient organisations, NGOs and industry.

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