

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **ELECTION OF NEW PRESIDENT AND BOARD MEMBERS OF EPF**

**BRUSSELS, 23 March 2016 – On the occasion of the European Patients’ Forum Annual General Meeting, EPF members elected 5 new board members, a new President and Vice President for a two year mandate.**

Marco Greco has been elected as President of the European Patients’ Forum (EPF) today in Brussels. Mr Greco has been Chairman of the European Federation of Crohn’s and Ulcerative Colitis Associations (EFCCA) since 2008. An experienced patient advocate, Mr Greco emphasised the need to work on the genuine expertise of patient leaders: *“I was first diagnosed when I was 17, said Mr Greco, and I became a patient advocate the day after. Because this is not what I do, this is what I am. What we all are. Patients”*.

The meeting also saw EPF immediate past President, Anders Olauson, being awarded the title of Honorary President. Chairing EPF since 2005, Mr Olauson was instrumental in creating and supporting the patient movement at the European level. Of his time at EPF, Mr Olauson said *“I am proud to be part of the European patient community and to have helped EPF to become the major voice for patients in Europe –alone one can achieve very little, together so much”*.

The EPF Board is also happy to welcome two new members, Michal Rataj from the European Alliance of Neuromuscular Disorders Associations, and Juan Fuertes, from Pulmonary Hypertension Association Europe (PHA Europe). Both are committed to advance the representation of patients at the EU level, with their very own practical experience as in advocacy.

Three members of the Board have been re-elected for a new two year term: Brian West (European Aids Treatment Group , EATG)) who was elected by the board as Vice President, Dominik Tomek (AOPP, Slovakian Patients’ Coalition) and Susanna Palkonnen (European Federation of Allergies and Airways Diseases Association, EFA).

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The **European Patients’ Forum (EPF)** was founded in 2003 to ensure that the patients’ community drives policies and programmes that affect patients’ lives to bring changes empowering them to be equal citizens in the EU.

EPF currently represents 67 members, which are national coalitions of patients organisations and disease-specific patient organisations working at European level, and. EPF reflects the voice of an estimated 150 million patients affected by various chronic diseases throughout Europe.

EPF's vision for the future is that all patients with chronic and/or lifelong conditions in the EU have access to high quality, patient-centred equitable health and social care.

The EPF strategic goals focus on areas such as health literacy, healthcare design and delivery, patient involvement, patient empowerment, sustainable patients' organisations and non-discrimination.

[www.eu-patient.eu](http://www.eu-patient.eu)

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