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## **ICN President praises WHO Chief Nurse's achievements and eagerly awaits appointment of successor**

**Geneva, Switzerland; 05 December 2022** – The World Health Organization (WHO) has announced that several senior staff will be completing their terms at the end of November, including WHO Chief Nursing Officer (CNO), Elizabeth Iro. At a recent meeting, ICN President Dr Pamela Cipriano and WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus discussed the importance of nursing leadership across WHO's work and Dr Cipriano was assured that the position of WHO CNO would remain.

Dr Cipriano said:

“When Dr Tedros reinstated the role of CNO at WHO, he demonstrated his commitment to the nursing profession and reinforced how important nursing advice and input is at the global level. ICN would like to see WHO grow nursing leadership and support, not just at WHO headquarters, but in the regional offices as well.

Commenting on Elizabeth Iro's contributions, Dr Cipriano added:

‘ICN is so grateful for the work achieved by Elizabeth Iro over the past five years. She championed the undeniable and pivotal role of nurses and midwives in delivering the global health agenda through the very first *State of the World's Nursing* report in 2020, the designation of the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife in 2020, the *WHO Global Strategic Directions for Nursing and Midwifery 2021-2025*, and, of course, the unwavering support of nurses during the COVID-19 pandemic.

‘Elizabeth Iro has shown the critical importance of the role of the WHO Chief Nurse to raise the voice of nursing and influence health policy by instilling ideas that reinforce person-centred strategies to strengthen health systems and health security. Her service and contributions to nursing are exemplary. We look forward to welcoming and working with her successor.’

Dr Cipriano also underlined the importance of the post of Chief Nurse:

“Nurses have been at the frontlines of the COVID-19 response and are essential to pandemic preparedness. But nursing's role is as critical at the policy table as it is across care delivery settings. WHO's objectives to strengthen nursing and midwifery cannot be met without a nursing presence at the highest decision-making level. ICN looks forward to working closely with the next WHO Chief Nurse and we thank Dr Tedros for his continued support and involvement of nursing.”

Over many years, ICN has consistently advocated for nursing leadership and advice roles within WHO and the value that brings to global health policy. The importance of nursing leadership at all levels is reflected in the *Global Strategic Directions for Nursing and Midwifery*.

ICN wrote to Dr Tedros when he was first elected to request that he reinstate the CNO role. Upon his election in 2017, Dr Tedros reaffirmed his pledge to collaborate with ICN to ensure that nurses are fully included in policy making processes and made the commitment to have a senior level nurse on his team. He followed through on his promise by appointing Elizabeth Iro to the position of Chief Nurse in October 2017.

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### **Note to Editors**

The **International Council of Nurses** (ICN) is a federation of more than 130 national nurses associations representing the millions of nurses worldwide. Operated by nurses and leading nursing internationally, ICN works to ensure quality care for all and sound health policies globally.

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