

14th June 2020

AHO President Statement in Support of World Blood Donor Day

The world needs enough safe blood for everyone in need. Every few seconds, someone, somewhere needs blood. I am of the believe that giving blood is a fundamental act of love we can take part in. It is an act of selfless service to take care of those around you. Therefore today, on World Blood Donor Day, I would like to thank all voluntary, unpaid blood donors for their life-saving gifts of blood.

I am aware that this year's theme is, "Safe blood saves lives" with the slogan "Give blood and make the world a healthier place". The slogan in particular, for me, cements the contribution anyone in good health can make to improve the health of others. Blood transfusions save millions of lives each year, both in emergency and non-emergency situations. Which is why they are an integral part of universal health coverage and a key component of a resilient health system.

Also, as an advocate of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS), I see the role blood transfusions remaining critical to achieve the health-related SDG 3, specifically target 3.8 which seeks to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. Blood transfusions can help reduce maternal mortality, prevent epidemics of communicable diseases – think AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria – and combat hepatitis. This is by no means an exhaustive. I am simply providing a snapshot of benefits that can result from giving blood – a gesture that every one of us can perform equally well.

In Africa, promisingly, countries have made positive progress regarding the availability and access to safe and quality assured blood and blood components. Unfortunately, however, the demand for blood transfusions are on the rise, causing many patients to face blood shortages. For this reason, I urge countries to support voluntary blood donations as a key component of achieving universal health coverage, and to ensure a sustainable funding for national blood transfusion services.

At AHO, we have developed a Blood, donation & Transplantation Programme. The mission of the Blood Services programme is to cooperate technically with national blood programmes in Africa to ensure that they have sufficient quantities of safe blood to provide timely transfusions to all patients who need them, thus contributing to lower mortality and optimal patient care.

To end, I want to reiterate that health is a human right. Everyone in the world should have access to safe blood transfusions, when and where they need them. So, to all voluntary, unpaid donors, thank you again and please continue this noble gesture. Lastly, I want to congratulate and express my support to all blood donor associations and other nongovernmental organisations who are working to make safe blood available in healthcare facilities.

Join me to use today as a springboard to make access to safe blood a reality for everyone. Safe blood saves lives.

Graciano Masauso, President

Written by [Zach Malik](#)