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**ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION WELCOMES
PRESIDENT NICOLAS SARKOZY TO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**

PARIS, July 20, 2011 – Today French President Nicolas Sarkozy will address the Alzheimer's Association International Conference 2011 (AAIC 2011), the premier annual forum presenting the latest research from the world's leading scientists in the Alzheimer's field. The impact of Alzheimer's and dementia represent an international crisis. Current estimates suggest 36 million people worldwide are living with dementia, and this number will double by 2030 and more than triple by 2050. The costs of caring for people with dementia are likely to rise even faster than the prevalence and most governments are woefully unprepared to address the social and economic upheaval these conditions will cause. However, France, under the leadership of President Sarkozy, is one country that has developed and is implementing a comprehensive strategy to address the public health threat of Alzheimer's in France.

Launched in 2008, the French Alzheimer's Plan is designed to fight the Alzheimer's crisis and is centered on three pillars: to improve the quality of life for people with dementia and their families; to mobilize French society around the fight against Alzheimer's; and launch an effort to advance research. In total, the plan lists 11 objectives and identifies more than 40 comprehensive measures to successfully implement the plan.

“As the United States embarks on the development of its own National Alzheimer's Plan, the French Alzheimer Plan can and should serve as a model,” said Harry Johns, President and CEO of the Alzheimer's Association. “President Sarkozy's personal dedication and commitment to ending Alzheimer's has helped to spur an entire nation to focus its attention on overcoming the disease before it reaches its full, crippling impact in future years.”

Now in its third year, the French Alzheimer's Plan has resulted in the expansion of scientific knowledge about Alzheimer's, the addition of more than 600 practitioners trained in clinical epidemiology and more than 100 fundamental research projects in therapeutics, human and social sciences have been launched. The addition of 65 new memory clinics have focused on early detection and an effort is underway to add more than 500 new diagnostic centers throughout the country. There has been an increase in the number of respite care facilities to help Alzheimer's caregivers. The Sarkozy administration has also made significant inroads in identifying areas of collaboration between the public and private sectors to speed progress.



“The overwhelming number of people whose lives will be altered by Alzheimer’s, combined with the staggering economic burden on families and nations, makes Alzheimer’s the public health threat of the 21st century,” said Johns. “Leadership at the top is vital to address a crisis of this magnitude and important advances can be made where there is a solid government commitment. With France we also see that a well-developed strategy is only the beginning; strong implementation of that strategy and accountability are paramount to success as well – a key lesson for the United States as it embarks on the development and implementation of a National Alzheimer’s Plan.”

The National Alzheimer’s Project Act was signed into law by U.S. President Barack Obama on January 4, 2011, after unanimous approval in both the Senate and House of Representatives. It requires the development of a national strategic plan in the United States to address the Alzheimer’s crisis and coordinate efforts across the federal government. Some of its chief aims include accelerating the development of treatments that would prevent, halt, or reverse the course of Alzheimer’s and coordinating Alzheimer’s care and treatment. It also requires the United States government to work with international bodies to integrate and broaden efforts in the fight against Alzheimer’s globally.

About AAIC

The Alzheimer’s Association International Conference (AAIC) is the world’s largest conference of its kind, bringing together researchers from around the world to report and discuss groundbreaking research and information on the cause, diagnosis, treatment and prevention of Alzheimer’s disease and related disorders. As a part of the Alzheimer’s Association’s research program, AAIC serves as a catalyst for generating new knowledge about dementia and fostering a vital, collegial research community.

About the Alzheimer’s Association

The Alzheimer’s Association is the world’s leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer care, support and research. Our mission is to eliminate Alzheimer’s disease through the advancement of research, to provide and enhance care and support for all affected, and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer’s. Visit www.alz.org or call 800-272-3900.

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