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Environmental Refugees – Electrohypersensitives (EHS) in the digital world – a disabled population, deprived of home, work and basic rights

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TITLE OF THE PRESENTATION		
Environmental Refugees - Electrohypersensitives (EHS) in the digital world – a disabled population, deprived of home, work and basic rights		
5-10 KEYWORDS		
electromagnetic, electrohypersensitivity, human rights, radiofrequency, microwave, EMF, hypersensitivity, disability		
ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)		
<p>Hypersensitive reaction to electromagnetic fields (EMF) was known as Microwave Disease, in radar and electrical workers in the 1940s. Today, ordinary people encounter electrohypersensitivity (EHS) to various forms of EMF, ranging from low EMF to microwave radiation, also known as radiofrequency waves. As cities apply city-wide Wi-Fi and Wi-Max, and schools expand Wi-Fi to younger ages – those with EHS are deprived of the basic human rights to housing, work and public safety.</p> <p>When exposed to cellphones, routers, Wi-Fi, cell towers, smart meters, baby monitors or other cordless electronic devices, those with EHS experience diverse symptoms: physical pain including headaches, paraesthesia, cardiac irregularities, chest pressure, impaired thinking, fidgetiness, skin rashes and sleep disturbance. Many are unable to work and must quit their jobs in order to save their health.</p> <p>EHS is not psychosomatic. According to the World Health Organization: <i>“EHS is characterized by a variety of non-specific symptoms that differ from individual to individual. The symptoms are certainly real and can vary widely in their severity. Whatever its cause, EHS can be a disabling problem for the affected individual.”</i></p> <p>Electrohypersensitivity is estimated to be prevalent in at least 3% of exposed population. Once developed, electrohypersensitivity symptoms can occur at much lower levels of exposure.</p> <p>In most cities today, the electrohypersensitive cannot enter an airport, a hospital, a courthouse, banks, most workplaces, shopping malls, supermarkets. Electrohypersensitive children are forced to stop attending schools in which Wi-Fi and wireless devices are employed or face disabling exposures that limit their education due to induced serious health</p>		

impairment.

This paper presents several sentinel clinical case reports of individuals with EHS, in order to stimulate public policy discussion of the ethical rights of those with EHS, and to promote additional clinical research into this growing problem.

Including: (1) Sweden (where electrohypersensitivity is an officially recognized functional impairment / disability) - a former Chief Technology Officer of Nokia recently indicated that he developed EHS and the demyelinating disease Multiple Sclerosis after years of EMF and RF exposures; (2) Canada - a senior commercial jet pilot forced to retire after developing EHS; (3) Scotland – an experienced electrical engineer who became increasingly sensitive and unable to work with RF devices that he helped to design.

These testimonies bring out symptoms and signs, early indicators of EHS, that health care providers and employers should watch out for in patients and employees.

CV / BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE (MAX. 100 WORDS)

Dr. Yael Stein is a physician and researcher at the Hebrew University-Hadassah medical center. She has researched the epidemiology and health effects of various types of environmental and social exposures. She is co-founder of the Jerusalem Center for Genocide Prevention. Her current research focus is mechanism of EMF-related health effects.

Dr Mbong Eta Ngole is a physician and Public Health expert, committed to research and the provision of quality and evidence-based holistic health care for sustained community development. He currently serves as Regional (West and Central Africa) Programme Development Advisor for the child-rights based international NGO SOS Children's Villages.

Dr. Gaurav Aggarwal is an Occupational and Environmental health physician and public health expert. He currently works as UNICEF Public Health Consultant in Chandigarh Area, India, specializing in health promotion and policy making, with special emphasis on environmental and occupational health.

Dr. Joel M Moskowitz, PhD, is Director of UC Berkeley Center for Family and Community Health, where he has worked for the last 21 years. He has directed numerous research projects on smoking, air pollution and other public health issues. He has headed and participated in many committees on public-health related issues and has published extensively on public health topics. He is a consultant for multiple organizations. His current research focus is on epidemiologic research and Public Health policy regarding cancer risk from cellphone exposure.

METHOD OF PRESENTATION: ORAL