



WHO Executive Board 142

3.1 Draft thirteenth general programme of work 2019–2023

Honourable Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the World Medical Association, which represents more than 9 million physicians worldwide.

We applaud the new DG's vision of a new strategy and the commitment to transparency and member state engagement.

We regret that the WHO remains severely underfunded and that member states have not increased assessed contributions sufficiently to empower the agency to its intended potential.

We acknowledge that the work programme is aligned towards the Sustainable Development Goals and shifts away from a purely standard setting organization. WMA remains cognizant that many regions of the world deserve better protection and health care services. It is important to keep in mind that the WHO getting directly involved at a country level will come at the expense of other global WHO activities.

We welcome the emphasis of the work programme on health care system strengthening and Universal Health Coverage. At the same time, we express concern that the role of health professionals in reaching the goals outlined is not truly taken into account: Physicians dedicate their life to serving patients and communities, physicians are essential for achieving UHC, and a global shortage of educated professionals is looming in the years to come. The WHO must take clear steps for adequate distribution, supply and education of health professionals to meet the growing needs of the world population. For this we urge WHO to involve WMA in this process from the earliest stages.

Finally, WMA as a member of the Global Coordination Mechanism (GCM-NCD) on NCD supports the continuation of the GCM-NCD after 2020 as a successful partnership.

The WMA remains, as a global partner, committed to improving health around the world, both through the individual care and public health contributions and through its collaboration with the WHO.