



22 May 2017

**70th Session of the World Health Assembly  
Agenda Item: 14.1 Global Vaccine Action Plan (GVAP)**

Honorable Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the WMA, representing more than 9 million physicians from more than 100 countries.

We are currently in the middle of our timeline to achieve the Global Vaccine Action Plan GVAP targets by 2020. We realize that the current pace of progress toward achieving GVAP targets is slow; considering that almost all GVAP midpoint targets in 2015 were missed. The emergence of several cases of wild poliovirus in 2016, global measles outbreaks, and only 22 out of 40 countries being verified for Maternal Neonatal Tetanus Elimination shows that there needs to be a stronger commitment to achieving targets.

The WMA recognizes that many possible causes contribute to the burden in some countries, such as low commitment to put immunization as priority, weak health systems and infrastructure, vaccine shortage and inaccessibility, conflicts and natural disasters, outbreaks, and public unawareness. Strong political will be needed to boost the pace of the progress. However, we can learn from success stories where expectations are met such as the transition from oral to inactivated polio vaccination, which encourages to strengthen the commitment to achieve good governance and improve health systems.

The WMA advocates for investing more in health system, vaccine research and development, incorporating immunization programs to national health priorities, and strengthening leadership and collaboration. We also emphasize the role of physicians to support national governments, develop knowledge and skills, assist in surveillance, educate the public, and lead the community to follow the recommendations.

The WMA looks forward to working together with WHO and the global community directly and through the National Medical Associations in achieving GVAP targets and supporting immunization as an important key driver of world's sustainable development.

Thank you for your kind attention.

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