



## **71<sup>st</sup> World Health Assembly**

### **11.5 Addressing the global shortage of, and access to, medicines and vaccines**

Honourable Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the World Medical Association (WMA), which represents 9 million physicians around the world, and with the support of the Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences (CIOMS).

Recognizing the challenges that many still face in accessing safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and recalling that this year represents the 40th anniversary of the Alma Ata declaration, the WMA would like to remind this Assembly that access to safe and effective quality medicines and vaccines can contribute to the mitigation of health inequities and facilitate progress towards Universal Health Coverage. Furthermore, it is critical to controlling the global burdens of diseases, especially non-communicable diseases, and is central to the right to health.

The WMA encourages the WHO to assist in filling the gaps in the current R&D system and help in introducing new systems that address several Global challenges such as antimicrobial resistant infections and lack of effective treatment for dementia. We urge governments to seize the opportunities and flexibilities offered by TRIPS to take solid action toward high prices of many medicines including cancer and Hepatitis C.

In order to ensure equitable access to medicines, we urge Member States to explore innovative win-win solutions through collaborative approaches with the private sector to address the issue of pricing, quality and safety of essential medicines and vaccines as well as the supply chain management. We also ask national governments to develop, implement and monitor their national medicine policies, including strengthening regulatory systems, and tackle inappropriate pricing and use of medicines.

WMA offers its support in building capacity of physicians worldwide to ensure the delivery of safe, affordable, effective and quality medicines and vaccines. CIOMS complements WMA by offering its expertise and guidelines on research ethics and medicines safety.

Thank you for your kind attention