



## **WHO Executive Board 144<sup>th</sup> meeting**

### **5.5. Primary healthcare towards universal health coverage**

Honourable Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates,

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

The WMA welcomes the Director General's report on Primary Health Care towards Universal Health Coverage.

The WMA notes with appreciation the commitment of the WHO to maintain the comprehensive and integrated primary healthcare approach as the cornerstone of a sustainable health system for implementing universal health coverage and addressing the health-related Sustainable Development Goals.

WMA acknowledges the Astana Declaration on Primary Health Care, which highlights the *'fundamental right of every human being to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health'* through the commitment to strengthen primary health. Further we welcome the importance given to support the health workforce in the declaration.

On the behalf of physicians, WMA would like to highlight the following:

- To meaningfully and sustainably implement UHC, we need to strengthen healthcare systems centred on PHC;
- PHC needs to be a comprehensive and integrated approach closely linked with health promotion, prevention, specialised care and rehabilitation;
- ideally PHC should be delivered by multidisciplinary teams led by physicians;
- We highly encourage and support the WHO advocacy for investment in human resources for health;
- To overcome the shortage of health workers, countries should provide decent working conditions to attract and retain health professionals especially in rural areas.

The WMA is committed to collaborate with WHO and Member States through National Medical Associations on the implementation of PHC and enhancement of UHC. We wish to express our continued interest in working with the WHO in the preparation in the upcoming HLM on UHC.

Thank you