



**72<sup>nd</sup> World Health Assembly**  
**12.4 Promoting the health of refugees and migrants**

Distinguished Delegates,

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

We welcome the draft WHO Global Action Plan to Promote the Health of Refugees and Migrants developed in collaboration with IOM and UNHCR amongst others. This inclusive partnership constitutes a positive advancement to address the complexity of the issue. We welcome the references to the required need to develop educational tools for health professionals in relation with the health of migrants and refugees.

However, the Plan fails to address key issues necessary to ensure proper access to health care to migrants and refugees in line with human rights and medical ethics standards:

1. The Plan should include an explicit reference to the human right to health of refugees and migrants, regardless of their legal, civil or political status. This reference would be in line with SDG 3 “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages” and would prevent the risk that undocumented migrants be left behind in this important process.
2. The Plan should also address the ethical challenge physicians face and condemn any practice involving their participation to non-medically justified examination, diagnosis or treatment - such as sedatives to facilitate easy deportation, or bone examination for age assessment. These practices constitute a diversion of medically justified measures for police or judicial purposes. It can undermine the trustworthy patient-physicians relationship indispensable for the provision of quality care and may constitute a violation of medical ethics.
3. Regarding the priority 5 on health information systems, the ethical aspects of health data collection need to be addressed, in particular the rights to confidentiality, autonomy and privacy as well as the required informed consent of the individuals concerned. These values are essential safeguards to any possible misuses in health data collection. We regret that the Plan, in its current version, does not include a single reference to this fundamental issue.

Thank you