



**72<sup>nd</sup> World Health Assembly**

**12.8 Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health (2016–2030)**

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.

We welcome WHO's report underlining the persistence of gender inequalities and structural barriers in accessing health worldwide for women, children and adolescents worldwide. Amongst the equally important issues raised in the report, we would like to emphasize the following:

1. 200 million women and girls alive today have undergone female genital mutilation. FGM constitute an unacceptable form of violence perpetuated on young women and girls. The WMA is firmly opposed to the medicalization of FGM and considers participation of physicians in those practices as a grave breach of medical ethics and human rights standards. We call on WHO and Member States to involve physicians in the prevention of FGM as we believe that they play a key role in educating their patients.
2. Cervical cancer still afflicts over thousands of women worldwide, despite being a vaccine-preventable disease. We call on member States to ensure adequate funding and programs for education of physicians about HPV and associated diseases, HPV vaccination and routine cervical cancer screening.
3. Amongst the hundreds of thousands maternal and new-born deaths still occurring today, many could have been avoided with proper access to health care and information. We welcome WHO's efforts in launching a global handbook on family planning to address the barriers for contraception use and to family planning education. We would also like to encourage Member States to provide accessible information regarding maternal and child health. The maternal and child health handbook (MCH), or equivalents, constitute an important tool to improve continuity of care and benefit health promotion for mothers, neonates and children.

Thank you