



9 November 2020

73rd World Health Assembly
Agenda item 11.1: Primary Health Care

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 draft Operational Framework for Primary Health Care. We acknowledge the high-level political declaration on Universal Health Coverage and the Astana Declaration on Primary Health Care (PHC), which highlights the '*fundamental right of every human being to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health*' through the commitment to strengthen PHC. Further, we welcome the significance given to supporting the health workforce. The actual COVID 19 pandemic shows the world that a strong primary health care system with a well-educated, equipped and staffed health workforce is crucial to manage pandemics, while guaranteeing the continuation of care and treatment of all other diseases as well as vaccination programs.

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

- To meaningfully and sustainably implement UHC, we need to build a PHC workforce composed of physicians, nurses and other health personnel;
- PHC needs to be developed with a comprehensive and integrated approach to adequately deliver health promotion, disease prevention, specialized care and rehabilitation;
- PHC should be delivered by multidisciplinary teams led by physicians;
- We highly encourage and support the WHO's advocacy efforts to increase investment in human resources for health;
- To overcome the shortage of the health workforce, member states should provide decent working conditions to attract and retain health professionals, particularly in rural areas.

The WMA is committed to collaborating with WHO and Member States through National Medical Associations on the implementation of PHC and the enhancement of UHC.

Thank you very much.