



Statement in Support of Korean Junior Doctors from the Junior Doctors Network (JDN)

The Junior Doctors Network (JDN) of the World Medical Association (WMA), stands in solidarity with the junior doctors of South Korea during these challenging times. Our commitment is to uphold the dignity, rights, and welfare of all physicians across the globe, and it is within this nature that we issue the following statement.

The [World Medical Association has long recognized the right of doctors to engage in collective action](#), including strikes, as a legitimate means to advocate for better working conditions, patient care, and the overall health of the communities they serve. The WMA's [Statement on the Ethical Implications of Collective Action by Physicians](#) outlines the ethical framework within which such actions should be undertaken, emphasizing the balance between physicians' duties to their patients and their rights as professionals and employees.

Additionally, the World Health Organization and its member states have adopted [the Global Health and Care Workers Compact](#) outlining a robust legal framework to protect Health Professionals, ensuring decent working conditions, enabling work environments and affirming their right to collective action and association.

The current situation in South Korea, marked by the significant collective action of thousands of junior doctors, underscores a deep and unresolved conflict between the medical fraternity and government policies. The proposed increase in medical student quotas, while intended to address a shortage of doctors, has not been met with consensus and is perceived as a measure that seeks to undermine the quality of medical education and health services delivery rather than enhancing it.

Furthermore, we note with much discomposure, the punitive actions taken by local authorities against protesting doctors, including but not limited to threats of legal action and suspension of their medical licenses. These actions we vehemently decry, understanding that they can only serve to exacerbate tensions and hinder processes that aim to resolve this conflict amicably and constructively. Such measures not only undermine the principles of democratic engagement and freedom of expression but also pose a significant threat to the stability and resilience of the healthcare system.



With the aforementioned considered, the Junior Doctors Network:

1. Expresses support for the Junior Doctors of South Korea in their right to collective action aimed at advocating for their professional rights, improved working conditions, and the improvement of healthcare delivery systems.
2. Calls upon the Korean Government to immediately cease punitive actions against medical professionals engaging in collective action and to engage in open, transparent, and constructive dialogue with representatives of the medical community to address the underlying concerns at hand.
3. Recommends that any resolution(s) passed/taken, acknowledges the critical importance of maintaining high standards in medical education and healthcare delivery, ensuring that the workforce is adequately supported to meet the current and future demands of the healthcare sector holistically, together with health needs of the population.

The Junior Doctors Network remains committed to advocating for the rights and well-being of junior doctors worldwide and calls for a resolution to the situation in South Korea that honors the principles of justice, equity, and mutual respect.

About the World Medical Association Junior Doctors Network (WMA JDN)

The Junior Doctors Network (JDN) serves as an international platform for junior doctors to facilitate an open dialogue of global events and activities that are relevant to their postgraduate training and the World Medical Association (WMA). Its mission is to empower young physicians to work together towards a healthier world through advocacy, education, and international collaboration. You can learn more about the WMA JDN [here](#) or contact us on chair.jdn@wma.net