



# IFMSA

International Federation of  
Medical Students' Associations

## **Statement of International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA) 69th World Health Assembly, Geneva, Switzerland**

### **Agenda item 14.6 WHO response in severe, large-scale emergencies**

Honorable chairperson,  
Excellences,  
Distinguished delegates,

The world is currently facing more disasters than ever in. This has short and long term effect on the environment, financial and social development. Affected civilians often face a lack of security and access to social services. We are talking about lost generations and death which could have been prevented.

IFMSA would like to thank WHO for the report on its response in severe large-scale emergencies and for responding in 2015 alone to 40 emergencies including unexpected six concurrent emergencies evaluated as the most severe.

We believe, that the longer-term solution lies in the capacity of countries to respond to striking hazards and to mitigate the effects and manage their own responses to natural and manmade disasters. However, in order to ensure resilient and sustainable development, disaster mitigation is built into the development process at all levels.

We call for the international community to maintain its focus beyond emergency relief and to support the medium and long-term rehabilitation, reconstruction and risk-reduction efforts of the affected countries. Health care is a basic service which needs to be maintained no matter prevalence or degree of disaster. We thereby urge Member States to build capacity to strengthen the system in order to cope with striking hazards.

Healthcare professionals have the obligation to preserve the health and the dignity of the patients, but at the same time we highlight the importance of protection of facilities and medical staff from any kind of conflict. There is an urgent need for solutions to the lack of respect to IHL and medical ethics within disasters and other emergencies. A long term solution includes enhanced training on IHL for health workers.

Thank you.