



IFMSA

International Federation of
Medical Students' Associations

**Statement of the
International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA)
70th World Health Assembly of the World Health Organization
*Agenda Item 12.1 Health Emergencies***

Distinguished Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

This statement is made on behalf of the International Federation of Medical Students' Associations, supported by the Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition, which is comprised of more than 30 health, civil society and professional organizations dedicated to promoting the security of health workers and services threatened by war or civil unrest.

We would like to express our deep appreciation of WHO's response in health emergencies and welcome the Director-General's report on this matter. We would like to share with you two observations.

Firstly, medical and humanitarian response for people in need means life-saving assistance for the most vulnerable communities. Yet, in today's reality, medical and humanitarian aid often fails to reach millions of those who need it the most, not fulfilling the aim to truly "leave no one behind.". As reflected in the Director General's report, WHO's abilities to effectively respond are greatly limited by a lack of funding. Hence, we urge all Member States to increase funding and investments for medical and humanitarian activities, to bridge the emerging funding gap in global humanitarian financing and adhere to the recommendations made by the High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing.

Secondly, we would like to highlight an important element of WHO's work in emergencies: the protection of health care services. This month the Coalition issued a report on attacks on health care services in 2016 in 23 countries. Its findings of widespread assaults, abductions, killings of health workers and attacks on the facilities where they work, are alarming. WHO has been increasingly active in advocacy against attacks, identification and implementation of measures to reduce risks of attacks, and collecting and consolidating quantitative and qualitative data on attacks. The work needs to continue and indeed expand, and we support and encourage such action.

Thank you for your attention.