



# IFMSA

International Federation of  
Medical Students' Associations

## Statement of International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA) 68th WHO RC for Europe, Rome, Italy 17-20 September 2018

### Action plan to improve public health preparedness and response in the WHO European Region

The IFMSA applauds the efforts of WHO in strengthening national and regional capacities to effectively prevent, prepare for, detect and respond to public health threats and to provide support to affected countries, when necessary.

Over the last two centuries, science made huge progress in the fight against infectious diseases. But the biggest battles may still be to come, as the increase in plane traffic, contagious illnesses spread faster than ever. Tuberculosis and other diseases are becoming resistant to antibiotics. AMR is a global issue that requires multisectoral collaboration between multiple stakeholders to face all factors contributing to its existence.

The IFMSA regrets the thousands of deaths and immeasurable suffering caused by Emerging Infectious Diseases outbreaks, the risk of which remains a major public health concern and will have many long-term impacts on the societies and economies of the affected countries.

This is why the IFMSA believes strong action is required to improve preparedness and respond better to future outbreaks. Emerging Infectious Diseases are affecting nations across the world and have demonstrated their capacity to overload existing healthcare systems in diverse circumstances.

As the next generation of Health Professionals, we believe that an approach to strengthen health systems in many countries towards public health preparedness and response should include the following principles:

- Lead coordination of the Health Cluster in disaster response for future outbreaks whilst including all relevant international, governmental, non-governmental and local stakeholders.
- Provide adequate financing for WHO Contingency Fund for Emergencies.
- Urge Member States to include all relevant non-governmental and local stakeholders in their response to emergencies, as well as advocate for joint 'One-Health' efforts to strengthen preparedness.
- Encourage Member States to provide governments with the technical advice and political push to continue with national efforts to achieve Universal Health Coverage;

It is only by taking coordinated steps, open sharing of knowledge, technologies and materials, including viruses and other laboratory samples, that we can truly push forward the International Health Regulations and optimize secure global public health.

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worldwide