



IFMSA

International Federation of
Medical Students' Associations

Statement of the International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA)

Sixty-fifth Session of the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean

Agenda Item 5 (c):

Draft WHO global strategy on health, environment and climate change

Honorable chair, Distinguished delegates,

The International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA) acknowledges climate change as the largest threat to global health in the 21st century. However, climate change action also offers great opportunities for improving global health through co-benefits. We therefore stress on the importance of health mitigation and adaptation strategies and the need for building climate resilient health systems that can ensure the promotion and provision of quality healthcare for all. In this context, we would like to congratulate the WHO for initiating the Global Strategy on Health, Environment and Climate Change and to declare our full support to its implementation.

As future health professionals, we believe that our duty does not only include our individual patients, but also our communities – locally, nationally and globally. Thus, we call the Health Sector and Medical Faculties to:

- Integrate climate change within the curricula for healthcare students worldwide and into capacity building programs targeting health and educational professionals from a multidisciplinary approach;
- Avail resources for research and activities, including student-led initiatives, to understand the trends, geographical distribution, and evolution of new and emerging health issues in regard to climate change risk factors and their impacts on social and economic structures;
- Develop climate resilient health systems, infrastructure, and technologies that can protect the promotion and provision of quality healthcare for all people following the WHO operational framework for building climate resilient health systems.

Moreover, IFMSA calls on all relevant stakeholders to:

- Lead by example by establishing and following an organizational sustainability policy;
- Divest finances from institutions and organizations associated with the fossil fuel industry;
- Increase transparency around the extent of investments in fossil fuel companies.

Lastly, and after collaborating with the WHO to develop a Training Manual on Climate & Health that allowed us to build capacities about the topic, IFMSA is very happy to announce the launch of its Climate Health 2020 Vision, an advocacy initiative of our Federation to include Climate Change in Medical Curricula worldwide by 2020. Health must be placed at the center of climate change discussions and a major factor to our success is our commitment. Let's commit together!

Thank you.