

**Statement of the
International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA)
143rd Executive Board Meeting of the World Health Organization
*Agenda Item 5.7 Medicines, vaccines and health products (5.7.1 Access to medicines and
vaccines)***

Honourable chair and distinguished delegates,

We, the International Federation of Medical Students' Association strongly believe that the access to affordable medicines, vaccines and diagnostics is a human right.

Rising prices and intellectual property rights continue to be a barrier for all health systems to provide full and affordable access to medicines. We call for support of the use of TRIPS agreement amendments or TRIPS flexibilities in low-income and middle-income countries as a key strategy to ensure affordable access to medicines.

The current research and development system has also proven ineffective at producing medicines, particularly for neglected populations. We support the implementation of research and development models that promote innovation and access, as recommended by the Consultative Expert Working Group on Research and Development (CEWG). We call for a new transparent, sustainable and needs-driven approach to biomedical research and development.

Access to new cancer drugs is severely limited by costs in all healthcare systems. Existing approaches to managing the prices of cancer medicines have not resulted in outcomes that meet policy and economic objectives.

We call on the WHO to continue to take international leadership for priority setting for essential research and development of medicines with a particular focus on the public health needs. We also support the role of the WHO in facilitating multi-sectoral collaboration between all stakeholders to increase access to medicines. We support the adoption of the WHO roadmap for access to medicines, vaccines and other health products 2019-2023.

Lastly, we emphasize that addressing access to medicines and vaccines cannot be done in isolation without working towards achieving Universal Health Coverage. The worldwide movement towards Universal Health Coverage is an essential step towards achieving access to medicines and healthcare, reducing health inequalities and achieving health for all.

Thank you