

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

Session: Agenda Item 3.a: Building resilient health systems to advance universal health coverage and promote health security in the Eastern Mediterranean Region.

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69th Session of WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean
- Cairo, Egypt/Hybrid

Honorable Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates,

Humanitarian crises, economic fluctuation, political instabilities, and a global pandemic; Conditions that had a significant impact on the health systems of our nations, exposing their fragility. Improving the resilience of health systems can result in increasing our capacity to respond more appropriately to new challenges.

The International Federation of Medical Students' Associations commends the WHO's work in addressing health systems' gaps revealed by COVID-19 and setting a regional agenda for building back resilient systems, while still recognizing the challenge of ensuring resilience through policies.

We believe that resilient health systems start with a resilient health workforce. We reaffirm that maintaining a healthy and productive environment that safeguards their mental health and well-being for them to deliver care to populations during times of crisis is imperative.

Therefore, the IFMSA calls member states to:

- Build systemic resilience that supports the healthcare workforce's ability to adapt to sudden change and global crises such as climate change and future pandemics.
- Commit to achieving UHC through reorienting and sustaining investments in strengthening health systems and emergency risk preparedness policies.
- Build strong primary care foundations as the most cost-efficient and equitable way to achieve UHC and health security.
- Invest in institutionalized mechanisms for whole-of-society governance with meaningful engagement of all stakeholders.
- Pay special attention to those disproportionately affected by health emergencies including people in conflict settings, and vulnerable and marginalized groups including migrants and refugees.

Thank you.

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