

STATEMENT

152nd Session of the Executive Board, 3rd February 2023

Agenda Item 25.7 Reform of the Global Internship Programme

Jamaica thanks the Director General for his report on the WHO's progress as regards implementing Resolution WHA71.13 "Reform of the Global Internship Programme". We take note of the four key actions which are intended to increase accessibility of the Internship programme, particularly to those in the least developed and middle-income countries. However, there is room for more improvement.

Jamaica sees great value in internship programmes as opportunities to train professionals, thereby contributing to our efforts at building our health system and workforce. It is with that in mind that we are concerned that the core policy objectives of the internship programme are not being realized.

While we accept that the COVID-19 Pandemic affected the progress of reforms, the imbalance in the geographical distribution of participants is discouraging.

Therefore, we strongly urge the WHO to reset the target date for the achievement of the 50% threshold, from 2023 to 2025.

Further, **Jamaica believes that a fair and equal chance of participation should be guaranteed for all applicants originating from the least developed and middle-income countries.** We would therefore welcome additional information regarding how the process works and any guidelines geared towards recruitment of interns in line with the principles of gender balance and geographical diversity.

Chair,

Jamaica believes that we should be intentional about building leaders in public health as envisaged by the Resolution adopted in 2018, through which Member States called for an internship strategy and training curriculum, for interns to maximize their training experience in WHO's technical and administrative programmes. **As such, how will the WHO improve the tasking and training elements of the curriculum to ensure substance in delivery?**

Chair,

As regards financial assistance, Jamaica is of the view that more clarity is needed in this area. **We would recommend that the amount provided to interns for travel, for example, be included on the website for each internship position.**

In addition, we would welcome information on:

- How much funding has been provided by external donors in this year's budget to support the programme?

- How will the WHO further mobilize resources for the programme's financial sustainability?

Jamaica appreciates the reform efforts of the WHO and looks forward to the continued reports on progress in that regard.