

Trinidad and Tobago Intervention
under Item 12.8 – Report of the Expert Advisory Group on the WHO Global Code of
Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel
79th World Health Assembly, 18 to 23 May 2026

Thank you, Chair.

Trinidad and Tobago acknowledges the “Report of the Expert Advisory Group (EAG) on the WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel” and notes the evidence on the relevance and effectiveness of the Code, as well as the guidance on the measures needed to ensure and strengthen the Code’s relevance and effectiveness. Several Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are among the countries with the highest emigration rates for doctors and nurses. The loss of healthcare workers hinders a country’s ability to provide adequate and quality healthcare, and poses a high risk to its national health security.

Trinidad and Tobago recognises the considerable progress made in the effectiveness of the Code, particularly in improving data on the global health workforce, reporting of bilateral agreements, raising awareness of the Code among stakeholders and adoption of some of its provisions in national and international policies.

Despite this progress, significant gaps remain to be addressed. SIDS continue to lose health personnel despite efforts to train and retain these professionals. High-income destination countries offer better “pull factors”, which prove to be a challenge for SIDS to develop and maintain a skilled workforce. This requires further attention.

Furthermore, we accept the recommendations of the EAG to strengthen the implementation of the Code over the next five years. As such, we will strive to engage in the following:

1. Data on internationalization of health professional education – Liaise with the Ministry of Education to gather data on the movement of medical students and trainees, during their training.
2. Research – Support research initiatives on health and care workforce migration.
3. Support for bilateral agreement development and evaluation – Continue to pursue Bilateral Agreements for international recruitment instead of private recruitment agencies.
4. Capacity development – Pursue educational and training initiatives with educational institutions to develop local capacity of medical professionals, especially in specialist areas.

We also note the level of engagement from Member States to submit their reports, but express concern for the low reporting rates among countries in the WHO Health Workforce Support and Safeguards List and SIDS. We therefore urge our SIDS partners and other nations to report on their experiences to support further recommendations based on evidence-based statistical data.

Trinidad and Tobago will continue to be guided by the WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel and respect countries that are listed on the Health Workforce Support and Safeguards List. Domestically, we will continue to invest in building local capacity through education and training, develop retention strategies and initiatives, and improve working conditions.

We remain committed to working with all relevant stakeholders and parties to advance fair, sustainable, and mutually beneficial approaches to health workforce mobility.

Thank you Chair.