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**STATEMENT BY THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF MEDICAL
STUDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS (IFMSA)**

By Mr Philip Pinaho Chao

Dr Anarfi Asamoah-Baah, Deputy Director-General; Dr Shin Young-soo, Regional Director, Dear Chairperson, the Honourable Dato' Sri Liow Tiong Lai and Honourable Ministers of Health and official dignitaries; ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the International Federation of Medical Students' Associations, the IFMSA, I again extend kind greetings to the 61st session of the WHO Regional Committee Meeting for the Western Pacific.

Thank you for the privilege to speak to you today. We would like to make a comment on the WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel, WHA63.16, adopted by the 63rd World Health Assembly. The IFMSA strongly supports this code. Recently at our 59th August General Assembly in Montreal this year, we adopted a policy statement on the globalization of the medical workforce. This policy affirms in its first stance "Every country should seek to ensure that international health personnel recruitment is sensitive to local health care needs so that international recruitment from any other country does not destabilize local healthcare provision of both affected countries."

We are pleased to see that article 5, health workforce development and health systems sustainability, takes into account medical students and directly reinforces the work of the IFMSA. In 5.3, Member States are encouraged to recognize the value of professional exchanges between countries and of opportunities to work and train abroad. Our Federation has provided professional exchange programmes for students since our foundation in 1951. Subsequently 5.4 and our aforementioned policy statement are well aligned. It states, "Every country should reevaluate its national health policies to ensure where possible they produce and retain a sufficient number of locally trained medical practitioners."

If we may, we would like to present 2 additional points which we feel may be pertinent in the consideration of this code. First: Accreditation for medical programmes should meet international standards developed in partnership with international medical practitioner and medical education organizations along with the World Health Organization. Accreditation should include both outcome and process standards, frequently re-evaluated according to up-to-date educational research. Second: Local medical training and testing of cultural sensitivity and language skills should be provided for migrating medical practitioners to build awareness of the cultural, social and economical contexts of the country in which they are going to work..

We would therefore, along with the WHO, strongly encourage all Member States and other stakeholders in this Western Pacific Region to use this voluntary code and thus facilitate the further advancement of health in our region.

Thank you for your consideration.