

**Intervention on provisional agenda item 15.3 Public health dimension of the world drug problem**

**70th WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY**

*Speaker: Ms Zuzana Kusynová, from the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP)*

Honourable Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP), the global organisation representing over three million pharmacists worldwide.

FIP welcomes the leadership of the WHO on the public health dimension of the world drug problem. As outlined under Point 5 of the A70/29 Report by the secretariat, public health strategies and the health sector have an important and growing role in mitigating drug-related harm at all levels.

Harm reduction services help to decrease drug-related harm, and pharmacists have been at the forefront of a number of these strategies, in collaboration with governments. For example, pharmacists in Portugal have run effective syringe and needle exchange programmes for many years. They also offer opioid substitution therapy. Similar involvement of pharmacists can be found in many other countries (such as France, the USA and Belgium). FIP is currently preparing a report on pharmacists' roles and contribution in harm reduction strategies, to be published by the end of the year.

Addictions, including dependence and abuse of psychoactive substances, fall under mental disorders. Pharmacists in the USA, Canada and France run prevention campaigns on the risks of drug abuse for children and the public. Pharmacists in Spain and Belgium also promote the responsible use of medicines with high addiction risk, such as benzodiazepines. FIP has published a report with an overview of different services for addiction prevention and care that pharmacists are involved in, under a broader theme of "Focus on mental health: The contribution of the pharmacist." It is available at <https://www.fip.org/publications>.

Given our expertise, FIP would be pleased to contribute to the WHO mechanism for surveillance of psychoactive substances and share pharmacists' perspectives and experiences.

Thank you.