

Intervention on provisional agenda item 11.5 - Addressing the global shortage of, and access to, medicines and vaccines

71st WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

Speaker: Ms Ema Paulino, 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 four million pharmacists worldwide.

We congratulate the WHO on the ongoing implementation of Resolution WHA69.25 pertaining to the global shortage of medicines and vaccines. The anticipated global reporting system will facilitate the assessment and eventually support health care professionals' clinical decisions on medicines in shortage. Well aligned with the Resolution, the creation of this reporting system was one of the six recommendations of the 2013 FIP's International Summit on Medicines Shortage.

Access to safe, effective and quality medicines and vaccines cannot be achieved without supply chain integrity and efficiency. As the report by Director General emphasises: "Pharmacists are needed at every stage of the pharmaceutical supply chain. The development, production, procurement, distribution and appropriate use of medicines, as well as the supportive functions of regulation, all require a competent, equitably distributed pharmaceutical workforce." These roles were elaborated in our report "*Pharmacists in the supply chain: The role of the medicines expert in ensuring quality and availability*" published earlier this month.

In order to ensure that pharmacists are competent, sufficient in number and equitably distributed, we are now working together with the WHO on the implementation of the FIP's Pharmaceutical Workforce Development Goals. We support a systematic approach for ensuring the pharmaceutical workforce is corresponding to the local needs in terms of size, competencies, education and performance, as suggested by the Director General.

FIP has been working towards addressing the global shortages of and inadequate access to medicines and vaccines for nearly a decade. With a growing number of initiatives in this area and the 13th WHO general programme of work, the WHO's leadership in the alignment of actions and priorities is essential.

Thank you.