

Intervention on provisional agenda item 3. Address by Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General

73rd 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), which represents over four million pharmacists worldwide.

Since COVID-19 was declared a pandemic, we have seen an even greater reliance on pharmacists in supporting communities and contributing to the resilience of health systems. We pharmacists continue to ensure that people get their treatments and professional advice as part of primary health care.

Pharmacists' organisations around the world have speedily adopted much needed new measures to ensure the continuity of pharmaceutical care.¹ For example, by organising home delivery of medicines to vulnerable patients, complemented with telepharmacy advice and support. Pharmacists continue to ensure an effective and safe pharmaceutical supply chain by identifying medical products at risk of shortage and implementing mitigation plans, such as by compounding hand sanitisers, and combating substandard and falsified medical products. FIP calls² on governments to authorise expansion of pharmacists' scope of practice, and fully include pharmacists and their teams in emergency protocols.

We recognise the importance, more than ever, of sharing experiences and knowledge. FIP has published guidance to support pharmacists and the pharmacy workforce in responding to the pandemic, now available in 15 languages. FIP is also providing educational webinars and new communication lines related to COVID-19.³

Pharmacy teams are risking their lives to continue providing health care to their communities during this pandemic, and several have died. FIP, together with four other healthcare professions, urge governments⁴ to ensure that all frontline health workers can be tested for COVID-19, and have access to appropriate protective equipment, to be able to carry on in what could be a long-lasting global crisis.

Thank you for your attention.

(280 words)

¹ A collated list of initiatives and activities pharmacy organisations related to COVID-19 are available at <https://www.fip.org/coronavirus>

² [FIP call for governments to support pharmacists and pharmacy workers on COVID-19 front line](https://www.fip.org/coronavirus#FIP-Guidance)

³ <https://www.fip.org/coronavirus#FIP-Guidance>

⁴ [World Health Professions Alliance calls on G20 to protect health workers facing COVID-19](https://www.fip.org/coronavirus#FIP-Guidance)