

Statement by Medicus Mundi International to the 138th session of the Executive Board on agenda item 9.1 2014 Ebola virus disease outbreak and issues raised

Thank you, Chair, for the opportunity to address the distinguished EB on behalf of MMI and PHM.

In large part, the flaws in WHO's response to the Ebola crisis were due to WHO's financial crisis, its dependence on a limited number of donors, and their reluctance to fund emergency preparedness. While MSs persist with an ACs freeze and tightly earmarked donations, WHO and global health remain vulnerable to similar failures. PHM and MMI call upon MSs to lift the freeze and upon donors to untie donations.

The crisis has demonstrated the importance of strong and resilient health systems in managing emergencies as well as providing routine health services. However, health systems strengthening has not been given its due priority.

The crisis has revealed yet again the failure of market forces in driving innovation for global health rather than corporate profit. We call upon MS to work towards a binding R&D treaty to mobilise funding for health products' innovation and to direct such funding according to needs rather than expectation of profit.

The crisis has reaffirmed the importance of the core capacities specified under IHRs. However, technical and financial support to strengthen these capacities has been inadequate. These are global public goods and should be supported through global resource mobilisation.

Many MSs imposed restrictive measures beyond those mandated by the Emergency Committee, in disregard of the authority of the IHRs. We urge MSs to request a report to the WHA69 on the countries involved, the nature of the additional measures imposed and the consequences of these actions.

Finally we deplore that some rich MSs were slow to volunteer healthcare resources to assist in the crisis. MSs contributions to the global emergency workforce need to be assured rather than dependent on political whim.

The lessons of Ebola must be learned.

Thank you.

(300 words)

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