

Statement to the 63th session of the World Health Assembly of WHO, on *International recruitment of health personnel: draft global code of practice (agenda item 11.5)*, by Medicus Mundi International, delivered by Anke Tijtsma, Wemos, during WHA in May 2010

Chair, thank you for giving me the opportunity to address the distinguished members of the World Health Assembly on behalf of Medicus Mundi International, a Network of organizations working in the field of global health and advocacy.

MMI has maintained official relations with the WHO since 1974. Medicus Mundi International is a member of the Global Health Workforce Alliance and one of its members, Wemos Foundation, is member of the Steering Committee of the Health Workforce Advocacy Initiative (HWAI). The critical issues regarding the theme of human resources for health play a key role in our work.

We welcome the efforts made by the Secretariat and the different regional committees to come to consensus on the issue of international recruitment of health personnel. The suggestions of a wide range of actors have led to improvements in the text of the draft Code. We are proud to have taken part in the discussions on this important document.

We are aware that there are perspectives on certain issues that will differ between source and destination countries. Several issues could remain topic of debate. However, **we feel the time is right for adoption of this Code**. The current text is an excellent guiding principle for all actors in this field.

Migration of health workers is taking place in this globalised world where all health systems are interconnected. It is commendable that attention is drawn to the need for joint action and shared responsibility of all stakeholders/actors in addressing the HRH crisis. We acknowledge both the right to health and the right to freedom of movement. A key element of the right to health is the obligation of countries to realize international cooperation and give support to other nations. We are glad the Code highlights those responsibilities at national, regional and global level. We support the specific reference in the text to technical and financial support for HRH by high income destination countries.

We support the voluntary nature of this code. We furthermore wish to emphasize that equity is to be one of the guiding principles for the Code. Moreover, we would like to reiterate the need for an ethical approach as well as the political will to generate a globally balanced health workforce. In practice it will be crucial to aim for coherence between and alignment with other policies, as this will be key to making the Code a useful instrument.

We foresee a role for all stakeholders to be involved in enforcement and adherence to the code and we especially welcome the role of non-state actors. The implementation and monitoring of the Code requires specific attention of all stakeholders, particularly when it comes to the process of data collection and ensuring adequate financing.

We would like to **urge the Member States to adopt the Code during this Assembly**. The code will benefit all nations, health workers and people and help to strengthen the global health system.

Thank you.