

## **Health Employment and economic growth: From Recommendations to Action**

**December 15 2016**

### **Draft intervention on Recommendation 6 and UNSC 2286 follow-up**

- Honourable Ministers, Commissioners, Ambassadors, ladies and gentlemen.
- I speak to you today on behalf of Switzerland and Canada, who are the co-chairs of a group of States working with ICRC, MSF, WHO, and others to find concrete ways to contribute to better protection of health workers and health facilities in humanitarian contexts.
- We welcome the report of the High Level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth, in particular, recommendation six on health care workers in Crises and Humanitarian Settings, an issue which we see as critical. The report reflects the interconnectedness among global health, international affairs, and international law.
- Our Commitment to Action is to advocate for full compliance with international humanitarian law, specifically in relation to the implementation of the unanimously adopted UN Security Council Resolution 2286 on the protection of healthcare in armed conflict.
- In recent years, there have been a number of attacks against medical and humanitarian personnel, engaged in medical duties, as well as on medical facilities.

- Alarming, such violence is taking place despite the responsibility of all parties to armed conflict to fully comply with their obligations under international law.
- The results of such attacks have been the death and injury of many medical and humanitarian personnel and patients, and the destruction of their means of transport and equipment, hospitals and other medical facilities, leaving affected populations without access to healthcare or to humanitarian assistance.
- Such attacks also have a reverberating long-term negative impact on health care systems that continue long after the conflict. This must stop.
- Implementation of UNSCR 2286 provides valuable guidance on how we can work to prevent such attacks and respond to them when they occur.
- The resolution's recommendations aim to enhance the practical application of protections afforded under international law, and urges States and all parties to conflict and all other relevant actors, to develop domestic legal frameworks that protect healthcare facilities and their personnel, train armed forces to ensure they understand their obligations, and ensure accountability of those who commit violations.
- We see Recommendation six of the Commission report, as supportive of these outcomes.

- We appreciate that the Commission supports resolution 2286 and has recognized that the protection and safety of healthcare workers in complex emergencies is paramount.
- Taking a multi-sectoral approach to the protection of health workers in acute and protracted emergencies, as the Commission's report has done, strengthens our collective efforts and contributes to the implementation of UNSCR 2286.
- We strongly condemn attacks against medical personnel and humanitarian personnel exclusively engaged in medical duties, health facilities and their means of transport. And we join our voices to those calling for respect for international humanitarian law, including the protection it affords to health care workers and medical facilities.
- And, last, but certainly not least, we commend the efforts and dedication of humanitarian and medical personnel who must be granted full access to deliver life-saving assistance to those most in need, and who do so at their personal risk, and despite the reprehensible actions of those who seek to target them.
- Thank you.