Honorable Chair and Distinguished Delegates,

It is a great honour to speak on behalf of the International Pharmaceutical Students’ Federation (IPSF) which represents the voice of over 500,000 pharmaceuticals students and recent graduates in over 100 countries worldwide.

IPSF commends WHO for paving the way for climate change and justice for the next 8 years within the Global Strategy for Health, Environment and Climate Change 2020–2030: Healthy Environments for Healthier Populations. Climate change has a significant impact on human lives and health in a myriad of ways, resulting from recurrent extreme weather events such as heatwaves, storms, and floods. These ultimately lead to increased zoonoses, food-, water-, and vector-borne diseases as well as mental health issues. Moreover, social determinants of human wellbeing, such as livelihoods, access to health care, and social support networks, are being harmed by climate change more so in low and middle income countries.

Pharmacists and pharmacy students are uniquely positioned as trusted health care providers to take initiative in the environmental movement. The large carbon footprint of pharmaceuticals speaks to the critical role of pharmacists in ensuring more ecological use of medicines by optimising drugs, which includes fostering rational prescribing of medications, reducing unnecessary drug-related hospital admissions, and promoting less carbon-intensive medicines. As skilled professionals, pharmacists are accountable to educate patients, health care providers, and the general public about proper pharmaceutical disposal and the link between climate crisis and health to stimulate action in areas that require systemic change, resulting in healthier living and reduced environmental impact. Pharmacists are also well-equipped to make significant contributions as advocating leaders in prioritising and developing an environmentally sustainable health care system.

IPSF Asia Pacific Regional Office (IPFS APRO) has continuously contributed to combating climate change and its hazard to all forms of life for years. Educational resources on ‘One Health Approach and Planetary Health’ were provided to address the global environmental change and its health impacts. Webinars such as ‘Planetary Health and the Impact of Urbanisation on Populations’ as well as ‘Sustainable Healthcare’ which sparked advocacies on health and environmental concerns among pharmacy students in Nepal, emphasising the association between the environment and human health. Furthermore, IPSF has held interactive projects such as ‘The Human Race’ project and ‘Climate Change Awareness’ to raise awareness about the effects of environmental devastation and to show solidarity with people living in disaster-prone countries and those hardest hit by climate change.

IPSF calls upon the WHO and its member states to engage with stakeholders and participate in evidence generation with priorities placed on benefit of participating in the climate change movement within the pharmaceutical industry, and empower future generations to take even bolder climate change actions with full system support including climate change training and capacity building. Extreme temperatures leave many families living in poverty with less food, less clean water, lower incomes and worsening health. We stand with the climate change movement for future generations and our children with critical consideration for better human health and a healthier planet.

Thank you.
IPSF Statement for Seventy-fifth Session of Regional Committee Meeting for WHO SEARO

For Agenda 9.1 Regional Plan of Action for the WHO Global Strategy on Health, Environment and Climate Change 2020–2030: Healthy Environments for Healthier Populations, and Malé Declaration on Building Health Systems Resilience to Climate Change

Prepared by
Mr. Myat Thu Kyaw, IPSF Chairperson of Asia Pacific Regional Office 2021-22

With Inputs from
Ms. Sue In Lee, IPSF APRO Regional Secretary 2021-22 and
Ms. Soon Ching Wen, IPSF APRO Regional Secretary Subcommittee Member 2021-22

To be delivered by
Mr. Bill Whilson A. Baljon, IPSF APRO Regional Relations Officer 2021-22