

**Statement of the**

**International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA)**

**76th Regional Committee for the WHO South East Asia Region**

**Provisional Agenda Item #9.7**

**Revitalizing the school health programme and health-promoting schools in the SE Asia Region**

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Honourable Chair,  
Distinguished Delegates,

The deteriorating physical and mental health of children and adolescents has emerged as a pressing health crisis in the South East Asia Region. The International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA) advocates for the equal growth of children and adolescents in terms of physical, emotional, and social well-being. We would like to thank the World Health Organization and its Member States for their efforts in addressing this issue. Nevertheless, we wish to highlight the critical need for meaningful engagement of young stakeholders in policy development.

Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) have risen to become a prominent global cause of mortality. Nevertheless, discussions about NCDs primarily revolve around the health of adults. Factors such as obesity, occasional alcohol consumption, and regular tobacco use in this demographic heighten their NCD risk in adulthood. The strategic investment in school health emerges not merely as a preventive measure but as a foundational pillar that addresses these risk factors, transforming schools into havens that foster and safeguard good health.

IFMSA proactively engages healthcare students in raising public health awareness and bolstering health education within schools. With a closer generational gap and a robust understanding of medical knowledge and informal educational methods, future healthcare professionals are better equipped to effectively communicate with students on sensitive topics, including but not limited to Sexual and Reproductive Health.

Recognizing the importance of extending health outreach to those not enrolled in formal educational institutions, IFMSA stresses the principle of leaving no one behind. We call upon Member States and relevant stakeholders to ensure that health services, promotion, and prevention strategies are universally accessible and equitable for all children and adolescents.

IFMSA firmly believes that collaboration among various stakeholders will benefit all parties involved. Thus, we urge the World Health Organization (WHO) and its Member States to take a leadership role in these collaborations and ensure active participation of all



stakeholders, particularly children and adolescents, in the development of pertinent policies and programs related to school health.

Thank you for your attention.

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