

ORAL STATEMENT

International Federation of Medical Students' Associations

9.3 Beginning of the Decade of Action for ending viral hepatitis, HIV and STIs as public health threats by 2030 in the South-East Asia Region (SEA/RC74(4)) and paragraph 31 of the document SEA/RC75/15)

Honorable Chair,
Distinguished Delegates,

The International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA) recognises the vitality of diminishing or eliminating the threat of viral Hepatitis, HIV and STIs. Especially in the South-East Asia region which comprises 10% of the global HIV burden and 20% of the burden posed by viral hepatitis. Though significant progress has been achieved in securing political and financial support culminating in the regionwide elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and congenital syphilis, major pitfalls still exist in the diagnosis, treatment and subsequent control of these diseases. Stigma remains to be a leading factor alongside undersurveillance leading to inadequate responses, with many patients unaware that they have the disease.

IFMSA firmly acknowledges a coordinated multisectoral response is crucial to ensure targets set forth in the decade of action are achieved and calls upon governments and policymakers to further invest financial and human resources into developing and implementing national strategies to diagnose, treat and eliminate viral hepatitis, HIV and STIs. Including dedicating efforts into developing robust surveillance for STIs to better understand prevalence and incidence in populations, researching methods to make testing cheaper and more accessible.

Additionally, IFMSA strongly urges Member States and non-governmental organisations to involve youth in policy, strategy and programme designs. Incorporating insights, utilising youth networks and ensuring future health professionals are well-prepared to combat these diseases as part of the future healthcare workforce.