

**Intervention on provisional agenda item 16.1 on the 2014 Ebola virus disease outbreak and follow-up to the Special Session of the Executive Board on Ebola
SIXTY-EIGHTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY**

Speaker: Ms Zuzana Kusynová, from the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP)

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of FIP and over three million pharmacists worldwide.

Every crisis is an opportunity to learn lessons and reconsider preparedness for the future. Periodically, various diseases have reached epidemic proportions. Last year it was EDV, this year or next it could be another virus.

The Ebola crisis has shown that our health systems are vulnerable. Education of the public on hygiene and prevention strategies, and protection of healthcare professionals should be priorities. Health system strengthening is a long but vital process.

In our Statement of Professional Standards on “The Role of the Pharmacist in Crisis Management: Including Manmade and Natural Disasters and Pandemics”,¹ FIP encouraged inclusion of pharmacists in crisis plans to optimise effectiveness. Pharmacists can ensure that victims have timely access to medicines and evidence-based information as well as fulfil expanded roles in first response, triage, immunisation and first aid. FIP is developing guidelines to prepare pharmacists to play an active role in managing any emergency.

In particular, the Ebola crisis has shown that in many locations people turn to pharmacies for help. To support the local pharmacy workforce, FIP developed specific tools for pharmacists to act against Ebola, made freely available (www.fip.org/ebola). They can be applied to other infectious diseases in the future if necessary. FIP has also developed pictograms (fip.org/pictograms) to support healthcare professionals in communicating medication instructions to people with no common language — a common situation in crises.

Although progress has been made, there is a major risk that it will be reversed if research on new medicines ceases. We are pleased to see continued efforts in this area.

We thank all healthcare professionals, fellow NGOs, the WHO and Member States who have contributed to Ebola crisis management and who are working towards preventing similar outbreaks.

(299 words)

¹ http://www.fip.org/www/uploads/database_file.php?id=275&table_id=