GLOBAL MODEL WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY **WHA4.6**

COMMITTEE B **9 November 2026**

Zero Draft Resolution

Ethical Governance of International Recruitment of Health Personnel

The Fourth Global Model World Health Assembly,

Recalling resolution WHA63.16 (2010), which adopted the voluntary WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel, and resolution WHA79.12 (2026), which amended Articles 2, 5 and 10 of the Code;

Reaffirming that the Code promotes ethical international recruitment while addressing source countries' need to retain enough health workers, destination countries' workforce needs, and the rights of migrant health personnel;

Recognizing the freedom of health personnel, in accordance with applicable laws, to migrate to countries willing to admit and employ them, and the need for fair and just recruitment and employment practices;

Concerned that recruiting health workers from countries already facing shortages can leave fewer workers available to provide essential services in those countries;

Noting that resolution WHA79.12 (2026) encourages source and destination countries to agree on transparent arrangements for investing in source-country health systems and workforce development, with contributions and results that can be measured;

Welcoming the 2026 amendments clarifying that the Code also applies when health personnel migrate to work as care workers in destination countries, and that its principles continue to apply during health emergencies and other crises;

Recognizing that the 2026 amendments encourage cooperation and investment in source-country health workforces whether health personnel move through organized recruitment programmes or other routes;

Noting that resolution WHA79.12 (2026) requests updated procedures through which countries on the WHO Health Workforce Support and Safeguards List may indicate whether they are willing to permit active recruitment under specified conditions, and countries not on the List may request safeguards;

Acknowledging that countries already report on implementation of the Code and that resolution WHA79.12 (2026) establishes further reporting and review dates;

Concerned that limited oversight of recruitment agencies, incomplete information about health-worker migration and shortages of staff or resources to enforce recruitment rules can undermine ethical recruitment;

Determined to strengthen practical implementation of the Code while safeguarding health workers' rights and the sustainability of health systems,

1. URGES Member States:

   (1) to review national recruitment and health-workforce policies to assess whether existing practices are consistent with the Code, as amended in 2026, identify which rules, data or enforcement arrangements need to change and take steps to bring them into line with the Code, as appropriate;

   (2) to assess whether international recruitment is contributing to shortages of health workers in particular professions or underserved regions of source countries by examining

how many health workers are trained, how many leave to work abroad, how many remain in their jobs and whether communities have adequate access to health services;

(3) to apply the updated WHO safeguards-list procedures when available, including provisions allowing countries on the list to specify when employers and recruitment agencies may actively recruit their health workers, and allowing other countries facing health-worker shortages to request measures to prevent recruitment from worsening those shortages, while respecting health workers' freedom to seek employment abroad;

(4) to use bilateral agreements, where appropriate, to specify who is responsible for recruitment, what protections workers receive, and how both countries will assess effects on staffing and services;

(5) to specify in agreements on joint investment in source-country health systems what each country will contribute, which training, employment or retention needs will be addressed, how results will be measured, and when partners will review progress;

(6) to oversee recruiters and employers by requiring accurate job information and fair contracts, providing complaint procedures, and investigating or penalizing violations under national law;

(7) to consider additional safeguards against exploitation, including charging workers improper recruitment fees or replacing agreed contracts with less favourable terms after recruitment, in accordance with applicable national labour laws and relevant international labour standards, particularly those developed by the International Labour Organization (ILO);

(8) to decide which recruitment safeguards must remain in force during emergencies and how urgent recruitment can proceed without leaving source-country services critically understaffed;

(9) to examine whether health personnel who take jobs as care workers abroad receive fair working conditions, reliable information about their jobs and opportunities to maintain or develop their skills;

(10) to improve records of how many health workers, students and trainees move between countries, their occupations and destinations, using existing WHO workforce accounts and Code reporting rather than creating parallel systems;

2. INVITES international and regional organizations, ministries responsible for health, labour and migration, hospitals and other health-care employers, medical, nursing and other health-professional associations, recruitment agencies, health-worker organizations and trade unions, and other relevant stakeholders:

(1) to help countries assess whether international recruitment agreements and joint investments have increased opportunities to train health workers, created more funded health-care jobs and helped source countries retain their health workers;

(2) to provide technical or financial support, in line with source countries' priorities, for training health workers, financing positions for newly trained workers and keeping experienced workers in underserved services;

(3) to share ways to inspect recruitment agencies, give applicants accurate information about jobs and contracts, and investigate complaints about misleading or unfair recruitment;

(4) to help countries identify missing information on health workers, students and trainees moving abroad and assess whether departures have reduced staffing or services in underserved areas;

(5) to involve migrant health and care workers and source-country professional organizations in designing and reviewing recruitment partnerships;

(6) to examine whether emergency funding for salaries, safe working conditions or temporary staffing could help countries retain health workers during crises, consistent with the 2026 amendment to Article 10;

3. REQUESTS the Director-General:

(1) to include evidence about the results of recruitment agreements and joint investments, and their effects on source-country staffing, in the guidance and technical support already requested under resolution WHA79.12 (2026), as resources permit and upon request;

(2) to help countries compare how they apply updated safeguards-list procedures, including how they assess risks to source-country services and protect migrant workers' rights;

(3) to work with the International Labour Organization (ILO) on protecting the employment rights of internationally recruited health workers, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on improving cooperation between source and destination countries concerning health-worker migration; and other relevant partners when assisting Member States with fair recruitment and health-workforce mobility;

(4) to use the existing WHA79.12 (2026) reporting cycle to describe progress and remaining problems concerning recruitment agreements, benefits for source countries, recruitment during emergencies and health personnel working as care workers abroad, with reports due in 2028 and 2031 and a Code review in 2032.