



71st WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

Agenda item:

11.8 Preparation for the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on ending tuberculosis

May 2018

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the International Council of Nurses (ICN) and 20 million nurses worldwide.

TB negatively impacts global social and economic development by disproportionately affecting poor and marginalized communities and those in the productive age group. Particular efforts are needed to reach underserved populations and to reduce stigma, discrimination and isolation.

Multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) accounts for one-third of all antimicrobial resistance (AMR)-related deaths globally. As such, continued efforts are required on the AMR agenda as it is central to tackling MDR-TB.

Priority must be given to strengthening health systems, focusing on countries with the highest burden of disease. We call on countries to invest in human resources for health to ensure an adequate number of well-educated healthcare professionals for TB prevention, treatment and delivery of quality person-centred care as part of integrated health services in line with UHC targets.

Efforts must be increased to end TB and DR-TB transmission through improved infection prevention and control (IPC) measures. This will require funding and high-level support in countries to ensure that IPC is prioritized and funded.

Healthcare professionals are at high risk of TB/MDR-TB therefore ICN urges WHO and MS to increase focus on occupational health in order to protect our health workforce.

Nurses are the largest clinical providers of TB care worldwide. In this regard, ICN urges MS to develop and introduce legislation, regulation and policies that support optimal use of the nursing workforce in its delivery of TB and TB/HIV programmes.

ICN works to engage nurses in strengthening health systems and to be strong advocates to end TB. Through our TB Project and AMR strategy, we commit to work with our members to position nurses as role models for TB care, to reduce stigma and to improve patient care.

Thank you.