



IFMSA

International Federation of
Medical Students' Associations

IFMSA Press Release

on

The urgent need for reconstruction of medical training in Haiti

Proposed by AMSA-Austria, bvmd-Germany, cfms-Canada, IFMSA-Quebec

Association Haitienne d'Etudiants en Medecine



Summary:

The International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA), representing over 1.2 million medical students worldwide, expresses its deepest concerns about the slow progress made in the reconstruction of medical faculties in Haiti after the earthquake from January 12th 2010. The IFMSA demands forceful action by the Haitian authorities as well as increased international endeavor to support Haitian medical students, and the release of promised funding efforts.

Introduction:

January 12th 2010, 4:53 PM. A massive earthquake hit Haiti which claimed thousands of lives and caused the collapse of homes, churches, government buildings, schools and universities. In particular, three of the country's four medical schools were destroyed. This imposed a profound setback in sustaining health care towards the population. Albeit an outstanding international support to Haiti was shown immediately after the earthquake, the flow of promised funding and the reconstruction of the medical school buildings are yet to be waited for more than one year later.

In addition, the quake caused delays in the medical curricula. As of summer 2011 graduating students are six months behind schedule and for that reason fail to start their community service of working in rural areas of Haiti, where the access to health care is worst. The strengthening of education in health care professions is needed urgently within the crisis-ridden Caribbean country.

Following Haitian medical students' appraisal the most urgent needs for an appropriate training are:

- the reconstruction of faculty buildings, facilities and campus infrastructure
- the secured access to literature and medical equipment for training purposes
- simulation resources for practice and improvement of core medical procedures
- a sufficient number of educational staff

The IFMSA, as a network of National Member Organizations of future physicians in 96 countries, strongly believes in collaboration and joint efforts aiming to improve the situation of students in medical professions worldwide and to ensure the increase of well-trained and appropriately deployed health workforce. Hence, the IFMSA and the medical students of Haiti seek for collaboration between Haitian authorities, international institutions, governments and health care academics in order to identify solutions to the post earthquake situation in Haiti and advocate for prompt action towards a reinforced healthcare system and an improvement of study conditions in Haiti.

The International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA) is an independent, non-governmental and non-political federation of medical students from 103 National Member Organizations on six continents. The IFMSA was founded in 1951 and is run for and by medical students on a non-profit basis. It is officially recognized as a Non Governmental Organization within the United Nations system, and is recognized by the World Health Organization as the International Forum for medical students. It exists to serve medical students all over the world. IFMSA is built around six standing Committees: Human Rights and Peace, Reproductive Health including AIDS, Public Health, Professional Exchange, Research Exchange and Medical Education.

Since March 2010 the IFMSA and its National Member Organizations bvmd (Germany), cfms and IFMSA-Québec (Canada) have made efforts to support their fellow students in Haiti. This is happening in forms of donations and providing advice in launching a Haitian medical students' organization. Through these ways, we hope to improve learning conditions and to strengthen representation of students' interests and their dedication for the civil society of Haiti.



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Please note the IFMSA policy paper on „Globalization and Medical Workforce“ in the context of this publication.

Available: http://www.ifmsa.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=233:policy-statements-adopted-by-the-59th-august-general-assembly-of-the-ifmsa-in-montreal-canada-2010-&catid=98:policy-statements&Itemid=117

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