

## WMA RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE RIGHTS OF PATIENTS AND PHYSICIANS IN THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

*Adopted by the 60<sup>th</sup> WMA General Assembly, New Delhi, India, October 2009,*

*And amended by the 72<sup>nd</sup> WMA General Assembly (online), London, United Kingdom, October 2021*

### **WHEREAS,**

Physicians in the Islamic Republic of Iran have reported:

- Deliberate denial of medical care in detention, withholding of essential and readily available medications by physicians and other health professionals;
- Widespread use of torture and ill-treatments in detention;
- Concern about the veracity of documentation related to the death of patients and physicians being forced to produce clinically incorrect documentation;
- Lack of essential functioning medical equipment and supplies
- Denial of the rights of hunger strikers; and
- Physicians' complicity in facilitating the death penalty for juveniles in violation of children's rights.

### **THEREFORE, the World Medical Association**

1. Reaffirms its [Declaration of Lisbon on the Rights of the Patient](#), which states that whenever legislation, government action or any other administration or institution denies patients the right to medical care, physicians should pursue appropriate means to assure or to restore it.
2. Reaffirms its [Declaration of Hamburg Concerning Support for Medical Doctors Refusing to Participate in, or to Condone, the Use of Torture or Other Forms of Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment](#), which encourages doctors to honor their commitment as physicians to serve humanity and to resist any pressure to act contrary to the ethical principles governing their dedication to this task.
3. Reaffirms its [Declaration of Tokyo – Guidelines for Physicians Concerning Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment in Relation to Detention and Imprisonment](#), which:
  - Prohibits physicians from participating in, or even being present during the practice of torture or other forms of cruel or inhuman or degrading procedures;
  - requires that physicians maintain utmost respect for human life even under threat and prohibits them from using any medical knowledge contrary to the laws of humanity.
4. Reaffirms its [Resolution on the Responsibility of Physicians in the Documentation and Denunciation of Acts of Torture or Cruel or Inhuman or Degrading Treatment](#), which states that physicians should attempt to:
  - ensure that detainees or victims of torture or cruelty or mistreatment have access to immediate and

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independent health care;

- ensure that physicians include assessment and documentation of symptoms of torture or ill-treatment in the medical records using the necessary procedural safeguards to prevent endangering detainees.

5. Refers to the [WMA International Code of Medical Ethics](#), which states that physicians shall be dedicated to providing competent medical service in full professional and moral independence, with compassion and respect for human dignity.

6. Reaffirms its [Declaration of Malta on hunger strikers](#) which prohibits force-feeding of hunger strikers as “degrading and inhuman,” even when this is the only way to save their lives.

7. Refers to the [United Nations Nelson Mandela Rules](#), which emphasizes that the provision of health care for prisoners is a State responsibility, and that the relationship between health-care professionals and prisoners is governed by the same ethical and professional standards as those applicable to patients in the community.

8. Refers to the [WMA Statement on Access of Women and Children to Health Care](#), which categorically condemns violations of the basic human right of women and children, including violations stemming from social, political, religious, economic and cultural practices.

9. Refers to the [WMA Statement on Natural Variations of Human Sexuality](#), which condemns all forms of stigmatization, criminalization and discrimination of people based on their sexual orientation.

10. Urges the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to respect the International Code of Medical Ethics and the standards included in the aforementioned declarations to which physicians are committed.

11. Stresses that physicians who adhere to the professional and ethical obligations outlined in the entire WMA policy apparatus, including the aforementioned declarations, must be protected