

**IAPO Intervention: Agenda item 9.9 Migration and Health
69th Session of WHO South-East Asia Regional Committee
Colombo, Sri Lanka 5–9 September 2016**

Speaker: Speaker: IAPO South East Asia Board Member: Bejon Misra

Thank you Chair, honourable members, distinguished delegates.

The International Alliance of Patients' Organizations (IAPO) is an alliance of patient groups in official relationship with the WHO and representing the interests of patients worldwide. Our 276 member organizations are based in more than 70 countries covering over 50 different disease areas and conditions.

We welcome the Secretariat's *Working Paper Migration and Health SEA/RC69/17* and WHO SEARO's ongoing partnership with the *International Organization for Migration and the UNHCR* to address migrants' health through the development of regional and national health strategies promoting ongoing dialogue and cooperation among all Member States involved in the migratory process as an interagency, interregional and international cooperation.

IAPO, however, expresses concerns for the welfare and security of chronically ill migrant, displaced and refugee patients, especially child patients. Their health is at risk due to discontinued health care and the impact of abuse, violence, exploitation and discrimination on route and in the camps.

IAPO notes that despite the existence of several ratified international human rights standards and conventions in the Region to protect the rights of migrant and refugee patients, including their right to health, many such patients still lack access to health care services and financial protection for health.

We want the Member States to adopt the proposed actions listed for Member States in SEA/RC69/17, in particular the six action points listed in section 10-15.

IAPO urges that Member States to develop and adopt coherent migrant-patient sensitive health policies that ensure equitable access to culturally and linguistically appropriate health care services regardless of status and without discrimination or stigmatization, and to develop a culturally competent health workforce able to address the needs of such patients.

Thank you for your attention.