

ALUMNI SERIES:

Immersive Experience at the 76th World Health Assembly

The World Health Assembly (WHA) is the supreme decision-making body of the World Health Organization (WHO). Participating in the WHA was an unparalleled experience that provided invaluable insights into global health governance and fostered collaborative efforts towards improving public health worldwide.

Being selected to attend the WHA in Geneva, Switzerland, alongside distinguished individuals like The Honourable Health Minister, Dr. Zaliha binti Mustafa, and Director General of Health, Datuk Dr. Muhammad Radzi bin Abu Hassan, was an immense privilege. This opportunity provided an exceptional platform for engaging with representatives from member states, international organisations, and civil society. The assembly was convened with the purpose of discussing and formulating policies on crucial health issues, influencing the WHO's agenda, and adopting resolutions to tackle global health challenges. The diverse array of participants brought together a wide range of expertise, perspectives, and experiences, fostering a dynamic and lively environment conducive to the exchange of knowledge and collaborative efforts.



Malaysia delegates with the Director General Of WHO, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus upon conclusion of the 76th WHA.

Throughout the event, the delegate role involved active participation in various sessions, including plenary meetings, thematic discussions, and technical briefings. I was honoured to be given the opportunity to deliver intervention notes on WHO Traditional medicine strategy 2014-2023, Substandard & Falsified Medical Products, Strengthening Rehabilitation in Health Systems and Global Strategy for Infection Prevention & Control. Engaging in these discussions allowed for deepening understanding of complex health issues, hearing different viewpoints, and contributing to the development of evidence-based policies.

One significant highlight during the 76th WHA was witnessing Malaysia's draft resolution on behavioural sciences being accepted. Malaysia's resolution recognised the importance of incorporating behavioural sciences into public health strategies and interventions, acknowledging the significant impact that individual behaviours and societal factors have on health outcomes. The acceptance of Malaysia's draft resolution was a moment of pride and achievement for the country and a testament to the global recognition of the role of behavioral sciences in improving public health. It highlighted the growing understanding that addressing health issues requires a holistic approach that considers not only biomedical factors but also social, cultural, and psychological aspects of human behaviour.

Overall, being a delegate at the World Health Assembly was a transformative experience. It deepened understanding of global health governance, nurtured cross-cultural collaborations, and broadened perspectives on addressing complex health challenges. The opportunity to contribute to shaping global health policies and initiatives was both humbling and empowering, reinforcing the importance of collective action in achieving better health outcomes for all.

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PRESCRIPTION

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Illustrator:

Ms. Norazua Ahmad

PRESCRIPTION

Faculty of Pharmacy,
Universiti Teknologi MARA,
Kampus Puncak Alam,
42300 Bandar Puncak Alam, Selangor.

CONTACT US

 @pharmacyuitm



 @pharmacy_uitm



 Faculty of Pharmacy UiTM



 <https://pharmacy.uitm.edu.my/>



 +603-3258 4645

 korporatff@uitm.edu.my