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2 European Junior Doctors

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EJD Statement on Healthcare Resilience as a Vital Strategic Component of

5 European Security and Defense

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7 European Junior Doctors (EJD) stress that healthcare plays a dual role - sustaining our welfare states by

8 promoting social justice and serving as a critical cornerstone of the European security and defense

9 framework. In the wake of the 2008 economic crisis, the subsequent surge in healthcare demand driven

10 by an ageing population, and the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate-related

11 events, recent geopolitical tensions, increased displacement and cross-border migration, it is evident

12 that our healthcare systems are facing immense strain. These challenges have only been compounded by

13 an ongoing workforce crisis that endangers the sustainability of quality care across the continent.

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15 High-capacity healthcare systems are essential to ensuring preparedness across Europe and on a national

16 level, ensuring adequate response to a variety of crises - from pandemics and security challenges to

17 climatic disasters. Our frontline healthcare workers, including junior doctors, have repeatedly

18 demonstrated their critical role in mitigating crises and maintaining public health under extreme

19 conditions. In this context, strategic healthcare investments and health systems resilience should be recognized as integral to the

20 security and defense strategies of European nations. A robust healthcare system is a strategic asset that promotes national stability and defense readiness.

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22 To strengthen our ability to respond effectively to future challenges, we urgently call on EU and national

23 policymakers to:

24 ⎯ Recognize healthcare investment as a strategic priority for European security.

25 ⎯ Increase funding to address critical shortages in the healthcare workforce, medicines supply and

26 to reinforce healthcare infrastructure.

27 ⎯ Invest in advanced training and crisis preparedness programs, including mental health and

28 resilience training, for all healthcare professionals and administrators.

29 ⎯ Foster integrated cooperation between civilian and military sectors, ensuring a coordinated

30 response in times of emergency.

31 ⎯ Strengthen digital health systems and cybersecurity to protect against cyberattacks and ensure

32 care continuity during catastrophes, conflict and hybrid threats.

33 ⎯ Secure continuity of care for vulnerable groups in crises through robust protocols, medicine

34 access, and remote care solutions.

35 ⎯ Advance in the cross-border healthcare collaboration to build a resilient, adaptive, and fair

36 European Health Union.

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38 The EJD stands united in advocating for the recognition of an enduring reality: resilient, adaptable, and

39 well-prepared healthcare systems are essential pillars of European security and defense. Only through

40 sustained investment and comprehensive strategic planning can we ensure that our healthcare systems

41 remain capable of protecting vulnerable populations, safeguarding public health and upholding the

42 resilience of our societies during times of crises.

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44 We urge all European nations, EU institutions, and political leaders to prioritize healthcare as an essential

45 component of their security frameworks, recognizing that a healthy population is the foundation of a

46 democratic, fair, safe and resilient society.

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48 The General Assembly of European Junior Doctors (EJD)

**Registered Office**

European Junior Doctors Association Rue Guimard 151040 Brussels, Belgium

 **office@juniordoctors.eu www.juniordoctors.eu**