

**[Item 13.1/13.2 Poliomyelitis Eradication/ Polio transition planning and polio post-certification]**

By Republic of Korea

Thank you, Madam Chair,

The Republic of Korea affirms that member states should plan and budget the appropriate level of financial resources required to sustain integrated disease surveillance as part of their resilient national health system.

In addition, we acknowledge that long-term financial sustainability is a key aim of transition. We encourage WHO to develop country snapshots for summarizing the trajectory of the polio transition, focusing on key milestones for progress, and outlining programmatic challenges.

Regarding the focus areas of the regional action plans, we stress the effective integration of essential functions to deliver immunization services to underserved communities where a high proportion of unimmunized children remains.

For tackling polio, WHO needs to convene a technical task force to support priority countries and ensure alignment among all partners.

Lastly, Global Polio Eradication Initiative and its framework being effectively implemented will provide countries with a better response to public health emergencies in the future.

We will continue to work with WHO to ensure a stable polio transition.

Thank you.

*[Full Statement]*

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Republic of Korea would like to express our sincere gratitude to the WHO Secretariat for its ongoing efforts to eradicate wild and vaccine-driven polioviruses. We support and agree with the direction of WHO's current work towards eradication, containment and prevention of polioviruses, including by updating polio vaccines, expanding vaccination and improving containment certification scheme.

To eradicate polio and prevent transmission, resources to implement polio transition should be secured. In addition, the efforts to not only strengthen surveillance within the strong and resilient national health system, but also secure sustainable financial resources should continue to be made. Moreover, the Republic of Korea supports the work on the effective use and reallocation of resources.

Countries that officially eradicated polioviruses have recently detected polio cases through the national environmental surveillance. In that regard, intensified responses and information-sharing on analysis conducted by WHO of possible transmission among countries are essential. We look forward to the new guidelines developed by WHO for national polio responses to such transmission.

It is fortunate that the novel oral polio vaccine type 2 continues to be administered successfully. We look forward to the vaccination result being shared afterwards.

The Republic of Korea also expresses our appreciation for the efforts made by the WHO Secretariat to carry out polio transition. We support and agree with the direction of the polio transition.

However, some regions are still facing risks of circulating vaccine-driven poliovirus and wild poliovirus. It is therefore essential to continue to carry out polio programs tailored to regional context.

To this end, evaluation indicators should be consistently reviewed to increase capacities of the WHO regional and country offices and more effectively assess progress in polio programs. There is also a need to conduct a review of the adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the exiting polio

programs.

Global Polio Eradication Initiative and its framework being implemented effectively will provide countries with support for responses to other diseases and public health emergencies in the future. At this point, we would like to stress the ongoing efforts to develop and consistently revise such roadmap.

Since the Republic of Korea was certified free of polioviruses, we have maintained high levels of IPV vaccination coverage to keep our poliovirus-free condition. Not only that, we have conducted surveillance of patients and initiated containment certification process for poliovirus facilities in the country. We are also seeking the use of environmental surveillance.

The Republic of Korea has run a national polio eradication certification committee involving government agencies and experts to supervise progress in polio transition. We are doing our part to fully implement the recommendations of RCC and have submitted the annual polio report to the WPRO RCC Committee.

Along with that, the Republic of Korea has regularly carried out a national survey of poliovirus potentially infectious materials. In 2019, we also obtained Certification of Participation (CP), and will make our continuous efforts to make progress towards final containment certification for polio facilities.

The Republic of Korea recognizes the crucial importance of close collaboration among Member States and relevant stakeholders for sustainable polio programs and transition. We will continue to work with WHO and Member States to ensure stable polio transition.