STATEMENT BY ZAMBIA ON AGENDA 11.7: ACCESS TO MEDICINES AND VACCINES

Thank you Chairperson for giving Zambia an opportunity to make a statement and aligns itself with the statement made by South Africa on this agenda item.

Zambia like many developing countries still faces challenges of access due to the rising prices of new medicines; persisting problems of shortages and stock outs of essential medicines, and vaccines; and increasing numbers of substandard and falsified medical products that pose an unacceptable risk to public health.

We recognize that investing in improving the supply logistics systems through infrastructure development, increasing essential medicines and vaccines budget allocation, recruitment of pharmacists with a bias towards supply chain management and training, are all key to increasing access to medicines and vaccines.

Thus, Zambia has embarked on decentralising the distribution and storage of essential medicines and vaccines by introducing regional hubs or warehouses and introduced a Drug Basket Fund to provide flexible funding that responds to the country's needs at a particular time. In addition, The Zambian Government has prioritised local manufacturing of medicines and offers incentives fast tract registration procedures, reduced registration fees;

We therefore welcome the revised draft Road Map for Access to Medicines, Vaccines and Other Health Products, 2019–2023 and are optimistic that the Secretariat and other stakeholders will partner with us in addressing our innovations, including increased research in traditional medicines.

I thank you.