

**PLENARY STATEMENT OF  
THE MINISTER OF HEALTH, BRUNEI DARUSSALAM  
AT THE  
76<sup>TH</sup> WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY,  
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, MAY 2023**

**Discussion Topic:  
“WHO at 75: Saving lives, driving health for all”**

*(425 words, 3 minutes speaking duration at a normal speaking speed)*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

and Good Afternoon (Morning)

*President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen*

1. As we celebrate 75 years of WHO, we recall 75 years of continuous work dedicated to improving health. Working alongside WHO, Brunei Darussalam too has made significant health gains over this 75-year period – our life expectancy at birth has increased by more than 16 years, we have eliminated smallpox, malaria, polio, measles and rubella, and the immunization coverage from our EPI stands at more than 95%.
2. What will the next 75 years look like? As we look forward, allow me to highlight two important issues, that I believe will shape the future of public health.
3. First, across many countries, the response to COVID-19 sparked significant advances in digital health. In Brunei Darussalam, the most noticeable acceleration has been in the rapid adoption of our national m-health app, BruHealth, now with a population coverage of greater than 90% of the adult population. There have also been significant

advances in managing health data infrastructure and the use of artificial intelligence.

4. In order to sustain these gains, we undertook two major initiatives over the last year – one is the establishment of the **MOH Intelligence Hub** responsible for automating national disease surveillance and response activities, and the other is the government's significant long-term investment in our **Digital Health Unit** to coordinate digital health transformation across the entire range of healthcare services. Our goal is to harness digital technologies and data analytics to offer more tailored health interventions across the population.
  
5. The second issue, of increasing importance in our social media age, is how misinformation and disinformation can destroy trust and affect health. In Brunei Darussalam we are partnering with WHO to strengthen our behavioural insights functions, to understand behaviours, facilitate societal cohesion and generate trust around health concerns. In this regard, we are pleased to co-sponsor the resolution on ***Behavioural Sciences for Better Health*** for consideration by this Assembly and we urge WHO support to member states in incorporating behavioural science in policies and programme implementation.

6. At a time of increasing demands on health services, with ever-more complex climate and demographic, determinants, how the next 75 years will look like may well depend on how we engage with emerging developments such as digital health and behavioural science.
  
7. As we recall the past and look towards the future, we must work collectively to advance a progressive health agenda that addresses the challenges of today, and achieves, for future generations, an even healthier future.

Thank you.

**-END OF STATEMENT-**