

Statement by Hon. Mohan Bahadur Basnet, Minister for Health and Population, Government of Nepal

Seventy-sixth Session of the World Health Assembly

Agenda Item 3

(Theme: WHO at 75: saving lives, driving health for all)

Time: 3 minutes

Words: 370

Mr. President,
Director General Dr Tedros,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

On behalf of the Government of Nepal, I would like to congratulate the World Health Organization on its 75th anniversary and greatly appreciate Dr Tedros, Director General, for his outstanding leadership especially during the pandemic.

If the history of global health is ever documented, the last 75 years deserves a landmark chapter. In this era, we have seen the true beginning of international cooperation in health. No longer is health an issue of a single nation. No longer is health confined to delivering health care.

Health must be central to socio-economic development efforts and a top political priority. Major health reforms including advancing Universal Health Coverage are impossible without strong political leadership and support from the public sectors.

In Nepal, the Constitution guarantees health as a fundamental right of every citizen and makes the local government responsible for delivering health care.

We have made impressive progress in saving the lives of our mothers and children. The current maternal mortality rate is 151 per one hundred thousand live births. Nepal is fully determined to ensure multidisciplinary skilled human resources for health and their equitable distribution across the country. Our step in this regard, introduction of 10,000 Midwives and their deployment throughout the country will help to ensure safe childbirth and motherhood addressing maternal and neonatal mortality.

For countries like Nepal, with high out-of-pocket spending on health, the disparity between the rich and the poor to cope with the costly burden of non-communicable diseases is breeding new health inequalities. The adverse health effects of climate change, the silent pandemic of drug resistance, rapid urbanisation has compelled us to revisit our population health approaches.

Mr. President,

Together we have achieved many milestones in public health and learned many lessons. As we are struggling through the pandemic recovery, we need more resilient health systems to provide timely response to health emergencies.

Let me reiterate the commitment of the Government of Nepal to work together at global and regional level to achieve the global health targets to leave no one behind. Let us work together and share knowledge and resources for equity and solidarity to promote health, keep the world safe and serve vulnerable.

Thank You.