



Statement by India at the 142nd Session of the Executive Board (EB) of the World Health Organization (22nd to 27th January 2018) on Agenda item 2: Dialogue with the Director General, delivered by Ambassador Virander Paul, Deputy Permanent Representative. [WHO HQ, Geneva, 22nd January 2018]

Thank You Mr. Chair,

Director General and Distinguished Delegates,

We commend the Director General for offering us this opportunity to give an immediate feedback on WHO's general vision under his leadership and certain concrete plans for the coming times.

2. The Draft 13th General Programme of Work for the period 2019-2023 is a comprehensive, forward-looking and aspirational guiding document for reshaping the global health architecture. We believe it would also prove to be practical and outcome-oriented as we go along. India believes in the primacy of WHO in global health policy making. Our responsibility as Member States is to equip the WHO with the necessary capacities, enabling it to fulfil its mandate.

3. Global efforts will succeed only if there is global participation aimed at genuinely addressing the global health problems. Global health is the goal and it should not be rendered secondary to any other considerations.

4. We support the emphasis on aligning the goals of the GPW with SDG-3. For India – a country of about 1.3 billion people, the importance of this approach towards achieving the target of Universal Health Coverage by 2030 may be easily understandable. We would like due global focus on the critical issue of access to medicines. India's position on this is well known. With WHO's mandate on health Research and Development and access and its central role in coordinating global efforts for the realization of health related SDGs, it is appropriate that the findings

and recommendations of the UNSG's High Level Panel on access to medicines are discussed formally by Member States within the WHO. The first world conference on access to medical products and international laws for trade and health was hosted by India in November 2017 which brought out specific recommendations for member states, WHO and international organizations.

5. We support DG's strong emphasis on the need for a more robust response system to address emergencies. However, India has concerns over the inadequate financing of the Contingency Fund for emergencies.

Mr. Chair,

6. There is no doubt that the WHO needs a transformation through an ongoing reform process to meet new and emerging global health challenges. We need a more participative and equitable EB. Non-members should have an equal stake in determining the agenda and resolutions for the World Health Assembly. EB and WHA are part of a continuum and should not be dissected in an artificial manner. We are satisfied with the results of the DG's thrust towards a workforce, ensuring parity with respect to both gender and geography.

Mr Chair,

7. India will continue to play a constructive role.

Thank you.
