

**Agenda Item 5.7 : Cancer medicines****Statement by India**

Thank you Chair

Cancer is one of the greatest public health challenges globally as well as in India. To ensure accessibility & affordability of cancer medicines, Indian pharmaceutical industry has played a crucial role in manufacture and supply of generic drugs which are now exported to more than 190 countries.

Considering the paramount importance of research and development for bringing new medicines into the market, India have notified Draft New Drug and Clinical Trial Rules, 2018.

Further to enhance universal accessibility & affordability, “Affordable Medicine & Reliable Implants for Treatment” named as AMRIT Stores have been operationalized by India, thereby minimizing out of pocket Expenditure.

At national level, Ayushman Bharat, with its two pillars – PM-JAY being world’s largest health insurance scheme covering 500 million people launched last year, complemented by Health & Wellness Centres with focus on preventive & promotive health, will go a long way to improve access to free/affordable and quality healthcare. The Free Drugs Schemes and Free Diagnostics Initiative intended to provide essential drugs and diagnostics at various levels of care free of cost is already in operation.

India is also committed to leverage the knowledge of traditional Indian Medicines known as AYUSH for prevention & control of NCDs including cancer.

Chair,

In order to enhance the affordability and accessibility of cancer medicines we need to focus on strengthening pricing policies, improving the efficiency of expenditure on cancer medicines, managing factors that influence the demand for cancer medicines besides encouraging research and development of cancer medicines

In this regard, we would like to request WHO to undertake further work on the affordability & accessibility of cancer medicines including governance capabilities which should encourage TRIPS flexibilities for facilitating Voluntary License agreements for patented medicines to make them affordable & also on delinking.

Thank You.