Thank You Mr. Chair,

We welcome this agenda as Food safety is of prime significance for public health. Food safety should remain in focus within the agenda and work of WHO including its institutional funding support for scientific advice in respect of standards development.

The size and complexity of challenges for ensuring food safety and healthy diets for all are enormous. There is also a glaring double burden of nutrition (both malnutrition and over nutrition, i.e. obesity & overweight) at unacceptable levels. These require an integrated policy, coherent action, and total transformation of the national food ecosystems.

Mr. Chair,

Food safety is key to achieving the UN SDGs. The globalized nature of modern food chains, alongside emerging issues such as AMR and climate change, impact food safety due to fraud food practices through deliberate illegal substitution, mislabeling, counterfeiting and adulteration of food products.

Scaling-up more effective enforcement, better surveillance, consumer-outreach initiatives, greater efforts to build capacity of
food businesses, particularly the small and marginal players, and addressing challenges from primary production such as removing pesticide and antibiotic residues in food are vital to building greater public confidence with regard to food safety.

Further, rejections of exported food products at the port of entry, particularly in industrialized countries is a significant challenge and needs to be addressed.

India’s low cost and effective model of food safety, which primarily focuses on empowering consumers and building capacities of key stakeholders, has relevance for all LMICs that are endeavouring to set up their food safety systems.

Thank you.