ITEM 9: Cervical Cancer as a Global Public Health Problem

Thank you, Chair.

We would like to thank the Director General and the secretariat for report for this item, and for presenting us with the "draft global strategy to accelerate cervical cancer elimination".

Scientific achievements and innovations enabled us to develop effective vaccines, as well as advanced tools for screening, early diagnostics and treatment, and future advances and are expected to benefit our joint efforts even further, including through increase access to screening "in remote and hard-to-reach areas where services are not available".

We must stress the importance of immediate treatment for women identified with cervical cancer. The report set the goal of 90% of women with positive screenings to be treated in a timely manner.

In regards to the projections in paragraph 9, we must note that there is only limited evidence for invasive cervical cancer reduction by vaccine and we still await long-term studies. It is therefore imperative to pursue additional strategies such as health education and early detection. As such, we support the points raised by the Thai representatives.

Israel has recently adopted in our Health Basket the use of a new vaccine against 9 strains of HPV, as opposed to the 4 strains vaccine previously used through our vaccination programme, and we urge our partners in the WHO to ensure that the most effective, highest quality vaccinations and screenings are in use.

Chair,

We commend the WHO work on the draft before us, and would like to make three points:

1) It sets a clear, evidence based and measurable goals, on the basis of which countries can accelerate efforts to eliminate cervical cancer as a public health problem.

2) The three pillars on which the draft global strategy is based on: 1) vaccination 2) screening and treatment, and 3) cancer management and palliative care, contribute to its cohesiveness.

3) We wish to highlight in particular the section on Surveillance, Monitoring and evaluation, which is very comprehensive.

We support the adoption of the draft action plan, and look forward to the development of the monitoring and implementation frameworks.

Thank you.