Chairperson, Tanzania is honoured to take the floor on behalf of the 47 member states of the Africa Region on this agenda item.

We express our sympathy to the Government and Peoples of the Republic of China for the lives lost because of the current outbreak of Novel Corona Virus. The Africa region appreciates the prompt and adequate response demonstrated by the Government of China in an effort to contain the outbreak. As the Director General repeatedly said, the crisis could have been worse had it not been for the strict and timely measures taken by China. The Africa region would like to assure the Chinese Government that we will continue to cooperate in the spirit of solidarity.

We would also like to appreciate WHO’s swift response to the situation. WHO managed to quickly develop an interim guidance for lab diagnosis, clinical management and risk communication. WHO has also been in regular and direct contact with Member States, both affected and those at risk, providing support as required.

We commend the Director General for his leadership over the past month in engaging with high level government authorities and for continuously updating the situation for Member States. We also appreciate the Director General for convening the Emergency Committee and we welcome his declaration of the outbreak as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. We also share the Director General’s call for a special focus on countries that have weak health systems, most of which are in our region. Although currently there are no confirmed cases in the Africa Region, member states are vigilantly strengthening their preparedness measures.

Further, the Africa region would also like to express its appreciation for WHO staff and the Director General for the support provided to Democratic
Republic of Congo and neighbouring countries in the effort to contain the second largest Ebola Epidemic on record, whereby more than 2,242 lives have been lost since the outbreak was first declared in August 2018. Even though the number of new cases of Ebola is decreasing, the death toll due to Measles in DRC has peaked with 5,000 deaths since January 2019, mostly among children below the age of five. This needs urgent attention.

6. The Africa region also condemns any kind of attack on health workers who are first responders who are putting their lives on the line daily for the well-being of others.

7. **Chairperson**, on Transformation Agenda, The Africa region would like to commend the Director General for leading the process. We are proud that the Regional Office for Africa has progressed ahead in terms of implementing WHO Transformation Agenda and carried out functional reviews in all 47 countries in the region. We wish to see the transformation agenda to further improve the way how WHO operates enabling the organization to be more responsive to the prevailing urgent health challenges for the decade of action, particularly at the country office level. As a region we understand very well that transformation cannot be achieved overnight.

8. For that reason the Africa region would like to reassure the DG and his team of our support as we journey together. When WHO wins, we all win; our people win.

9. Thank you