STATEMENT BY THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA ON AGENDA ITEM 13: NEGLECTED TROPICAL DISEASES

Zambia is honoured to take the floor and wishes to thank the Secretariat for their work in making available the report on Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs). We recognize that there cannot be Universal Health Coverage (UHC) without addressing the devastating effects of NTDs. We are delighted that this was highlighted in the political declaration of the high-level meeting on UHC.

Zambia notes that NTDs affect 1.5 billion people each year and these are some of the World’s most underserved populations. Further, almost all national programmes provide health services related to NTDs free-of-charge and these cost countries millions of dollars. Therefore, we commend secretariat, member states, and partners on the important advancements made since the adoption of the roadmap in 2012. We would also like to commend secretariat for the addition of three more diseases to the portfolio of NTDs as this will bring more focused attention and interventions of these diseases by member states.

Chairperson, we note with concern that in as much as there has been an increase in the number of countries including NTDs in their national health care budgets, national programs continue to be heavily dependent on development cooperating partners, with interventions focused on individual diseases thus emphasising vertical programing. Therefore, we call upon secretariat to provide support to member states to strengthen interagency and multisectoral collaboration and to integrate water, sanitation and hygiene, through the Expanded Special Project for Elimination of NTDs, as we endeavour to achieve UHC by 2030. I thank you