STATEMENT BY THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA ON AGENDA ITEM 18: MATERNAL, INFANT AND YOUNG CHILD NUTRITION

Thank you Chairperson, Zambia aligns with the report made by Benin on this agenda item.

Zambia attaches great importance to issues of nutrition, particularly as they relate to vulnerable groups of people, especially children. We believe Universal Health Coverage cannot be attained without addressing issues of nutrition, since malnutrition and unhealthy diets are a major risk factor for a significant number of negative health outcomes. With only 5 years left to the 2025 WHA Global Nutrition targets; and 10 years towards the SDGs, time is running out and there is need for accelerated action on this agenda Item.

Some of our proposals going forward include that the Secretariat considers prioritizing nutrition in the draft Operational Framework on Primary Health Care to ensure that nutrition interventions are fully integrated in national plans and policies; as well as advocate that Member States’ commit to including nutrition as part of the Universal Health Coverage Agenda at the 2020 Nutrition for Growth Summit.

Finally, the report alludes to inadequate care provided to children with severe acute malnutrition due to inadequate nutritional therapeutic commodities. In this regard Zambia, has added these life-saving commodities to the National Essential Medicines List though availability still remains a challenge due to the prohibitive cost of these commodities. We therefore call upon the Secretariat to assist Member States by engaging more with producers of these products; and also call for more investment in research and support local production of these commodities.

Thank you