

Eswatini: Statement item 5- Universal Health Coverage

The Kingdom of Eswatini is honoured to speak on the resolution on diagnostics. We wish to thank Member States of the AFRO region, middle- and low-income countries for actively having engaged with the resolution which addresses the urgent needs to increase access to diagnostics.

We thank the support of the Secretariat, including Afro and HQ WHO teams who integrated their input to include work in malaria, HIV, TB, also the emergency team including Cholera, COVID 19, monkey pox, Ebola programmes, as well as non-communicable diseases, neglected tropical and rare disease into this resolution.

Eswatini took this resolution, its maiden resolution to WHO, because of the challenges Eswatini and other African states, Middle- and low-income countries faced during the height of COVID Pandemic.

The adoption of a resolution by the WHA on the vital need of UHC for diagnostics would provide for the first time a unique framework for WHO and Member States to address the issue of access and capacity of diagnostics for a broad range of disease conditions.

The resolution initiative is benefiting from a lot of **support** from Member States, and the **momentum to** see the resolution going forward is here.

The scope of the proposed resolution on “Diagnostics” include all types of diagnostics, both “in vitro” and “non in vitro” (i.e., “in-vivo”) medical devices used for: diagnostic, screening, monitoring, prediction, staging or surveillance of diseases or health condition.

One element that was key to us as sponsor, was the need for WHO to meet with experts in the field of diagnostics and derive WHO endorsed definitions. The second aspect was to set up a team that looked at diagnostics of all diseases including communicable, non-communicable, Neglected tropical and rare diseases and disabilities and converge all diagnostics processes unlike the current parallel siloed processes that are in place.

At country level, the resolution challenges all countries to set up guidelines and processes to rapidly improve access to diagnostics.

The Delegation of Eswatini held seven informal Member States consultations on the resolutions and thanks all delegations for the very active engagement on diagnostics.

The draft is now fully co-sponsored by the 47 Afro-Region Member States, Bangladesh, and Indonesia. Eswatini humbly calls on more member states to co-sponsor for this resolution of critical importance.

I thank you