



Republic of Zambia

## STATEMENT ON THE GLOBAL STRATEGY ON DIGITAL HEALTH :156<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD, 10 FEBRUARY, 2024

**Thank you, Chair.**

1. Zambia aligns itself with the Statement delivered by Comoros on behalf of the 47 Member States of the Africa Region.
2. In trying to leverage technologies to improve service delivery in the health sector, achieve Universal Health Coverage and broadly, the Sustainable Development Goals, the Zambian Government has been implementing the Digital Health Strategy for the period 2022 to 2026. In September, 2024, the Digital Health Systems Project was launched with the aim of digitizing health services and combating drug pilferage. In 2023, digital health maturity assessments were conducted in coordination with the WHO and the Commonwealth.
3. **Chair**, eHealth is pivotal to accelerating progress towards the attainment of the SDG target 3.8, related to the achievement of *Universal Health Coverage*. However, despite significant technological advancements and connectivity, lack of access to internet and digital tools remains a persistent challenge, especially in developing countries. Digital exclusion exacerbates inequalities, marginalization and isolation.
4. Therefore, the intentional integration of equity throughout the lifecycle of digital healthcare solutions must be prioritized. Access to quality digital healthcare tools must be equitable.
5. The Global Digital Compact, which was co-facilitated by Zambia and Sweden, calls for equitable and affordable access to internet and digital tools. Therefore, there is need to strengthen the innovation and the use of healthcare technologies that are centred around patient needs and tailored to community needs, as this has the power to transform communities and improve lives. Zambia, therefore, supports the extension of the Global Strategy on Digital Health.

**I THANK YOU**