



**CHAIR
NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT
GENEVA CHAPTER**



**STATEMENT
delivered by Prof. Ogtay Shiraliyev
Minister of Health of the Republic of Azerbaijan
on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement
at the 73rd World Health Assembly
Geneva, 18 May 2020**

Mr. President,

I have the honour to deliver this Statement on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

This year the international community has been faced with the pandemic which has disrupted lives and livelihoods of millions of people, thus creating the state of paralysis in societies and economies.

The Non-Aligned Movement expresses its concern at the global threat posed by COVID-19 and underscores that the control of the pandemic relies on proper preparedness, prevention, resilience-building, and greater national, regional and international collaboration and actions to address this challenge in an effective and timely manner.

Upon the initiative of the Azerbaijani NAM Chairmanship, the Contact Group to Combat Coronavirus was set up, and on 4 May 2020, the online Summit of this Contact Group was held. In the Declaration adopted by the Summit, the Heads of State and Government expressed their full support to the WHO, while recognizing its critical role, guidance and leadership in ensuring the effective response of the international community. The Summit also established the NAM Task Force which will develop a database of humanitarian and medical needs of NAM Member States, which will be presented to donor countries and international organizations for the provision of feasible assistance. During the Summit, the President of Azerbaijan also announced donation of another 5 million USD to the WHO to support the most affected NAM Member States.

The NAM reiterates its traditional support for multilateralism with the United Nations at its core, expresses full support to the UN Secretary-General's plans and initiatives to fight the pandemic, and acknowledges that preserving and strengthening

the values of multilateralism and international cooperation is fundamental to promoting and supporting all three pillars of the United Nations.

We also express our strong condemnation at the promulgation and application of unilateral coercive measures against Member States of the Movement, that are applied in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, further express our support, in accordance with international law, to the States affected by such measures, and urge the international community to adopt urgent and effective measures to eliminate the use of such measures, that are inconsistent with the principles of international law or the Charter of the United Nations, with a view to ensure the effectiveness of national responses to COVID-19 pandemic.¹

The NAM Member States express their gratitude to medical personnel and reiterate their readiness to continue collaborating with the WHO in ensuring that one of the fundamental rights of every human being – the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health – is ensured and that no one is left behind.

The global efforts are rightly focused on countering the immediate and devastating impacts of COVID-19. However, going forward the international community needs to shape a global health agenda that responds effectively to future pandemics. This would require adequate resourcing and, where appropriate, policy space for the WHO.

Equitable access, fair distribution and affordability of diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines for COVID-19 are important priorities for developing countries, which should be responded to. There is also a need for exploring a new instrument to regulate R&D for pharmaceutical products, guided primarily by health considerations.

The NAM Member States reiterate their commitments to achieving Universal Health Coverage and health related SDGs by 2030 to ensure health security and more resilient health systems that could provide a timely response to health emergencies, particularly through integrated surveillance, building long-term capacities, and promoting progressive self-reliance strategy based on the local production of affordable quality medicines and the development of health technologies.

In line with the principle of health for all, the NAM Member States call upon the WHO to strengthen their support to governments in their efforts to effectively respond to COVID-19 by providing unhindered assistance in an inclusive and sustained manner during and after the pandemic. In this context, helping the most vulnerable people,

¹ Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras and Peru disassociate themselves from this paragraph.

including people under foreign occupation including detainees, should enjoy special attention in line with respecting dignity and leaving no one behind.

In conclusion, the Non-Aligned Movement calls upon all States to spare no effort in transforming 2020 into the year of solidarity and renewed multilateral cooperation to effectively address the emerging global threats.

Thank you.