

**Statement by The Republic of The Gambia
on
Resumed sessions of WHA73 (9–14 November 2020) and EB147 (16 November)**

**Agenda 11.2
Follow-up to the high-level meetings of the United Nations General Assembly on
health-related issues**

9-14 November 2020

The Gambia is committed to fulfilling its obligations to global health declarations in general and to those related to the prevention and control of NCDs. The Gambia has taken some key measures in domesticating some of the declarations and decisions arising from the UN High Level Meetings on NCDs:

Pursuant to SDG.4, The Gambia has demonstrated high political commitment to creating domestic resources for health financing in general and NCD prevention and control. Within the context of global “best buys” for NCDs, The Gambia has introduced effective tobacco taxation policies, through support from the WHO, as a means of mobilizing domestic resources supporting health services.

Hence, The Gambia is progressively moving towards creating a national health insurance scheme through innovative financing from the tobacco revenue to ensure equity and universal health coverage to reduce out-of-pocket (OOP) expenses.

In translating political commitment to NCDs, the Government of The Gambia has taken some important measures to strengthen governance for NCDs: A dedicated NCD Unit was created under the Directorate of Health Promotion in 2012, a national NCD policy and strategic plan is in place coupled with multisectoral committee for NCD prevention and control. In addition, with support from World Diabetes Foundation (WDF), six NCD clinics have been established in 2 health regions in The Gambia to provide quality NCD services. Plans are underway to scale up the NCD clinics in all the minor, major health centres and regional hospitals nationwide.

Most recently, The Gambia officially requested the support of The Defeat-NCD Partnership at UNITAR to prepare a new National NCD Strategy and Costed Action plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs. The goal is to ensure that The Gambia moves on track towards achieving the globally agreed targets including reducing premature mortality from NCDs by 25% by 2025.

We welcome the proposed operational framework for primary health care as we believe that increased primary health care service packages will be needed to be achieve our goals in addition to creating financial protection tools for NCDs. Therefore, we encourage The Defeat-NCD Partnership to join us in establishing The Gambia NCD pooled funds and to launch the Defeat-NCD Marketplace to be part of our operational frameworks to help increase access to quality assured, affordable NCD supplies.

The Gambia is also excited to see the EB 146 (14) decisions for accelerating actions to reduce the harmful use of alcohol, and would like to renew our commitment to establishing policies and increasing the number of interventions aiming to reduce availability of retailed alcohol, enforce restrictions on promotion of alcohol products and raising taxes on alcoholic beverages to reduce their consumption.

Finally, we would like to call upon the support of the World Bank, the African Development Bank, International Finance Corporation, other financial institutions, and our bilateral donors such as WDF to help The Gambia achieve its universal health coverage goals. We invite you to join the efforts of The Gambia Government, WDF and the Defeat-NCD Partnership to prepare and invest in our new National NCD Strategy and Costed Action Plan.

Thank you

Signed

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