

**SEVENTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY
(RESUMED SESSION-VIRTUAL)
9 – 14 NOVEMBER 2020**

Agenda Item No. : 13.5
Title : Poliomyelitis
Ref. Document : A73/12 and A73/13

Intervention Note :

Malaysia takes note of the reports as in Documents A73/12 and A73/13. While we continue the efforts to achieve global eradication of wild poliovirus, the threat from vaccine-derived polioviruses (VDPVs) is growing and disturbing. This is especially so in countries like Malaysia which have been previously certified as polio free.

Malaysia commends the efforts in developing the Strategy for Control of cVDPV2 2020-2021 and the acceleration of assessment and roll-out of novel oral polio vaccine type 2. We also congratulate Nigeria and the Region of Africa for the certification of wild poliovirus eradication in August 2020.

As attempts to stop VDPV transmission are implemented, the COVID-19 pandemic has stalled polio vaccination campaigns in affected countries, and this has further increased the risk of emergence of new VDPVs. This is exactly what Malaysia is facing. Polio surveillance programmes have been affected, as key staff are mobilized to focus on controlling COVID-19. Hence, technical guidance and support by GPEI partners during these difficult times are required by affected countries.

We also urge the involvement of GPEI partners and other international organizations in assisting countries to address the issues of highly mobile cross border stateless populations and undocumented migrants, who are at an even greater risk of missing not only routine immunization, but also polio vaccination campaigns. Efforts to address this marginalized population will not only benefit polio control, but integrated with other health initiatives, are in line with the Immunization Agenda 2030 to leave no one behind.