

Sri Lanka's intervention on Agenda item 13.1, 13.2 and 14

Sri Lanka thanks the WHO for the commendable work done for emergency and pandemic response. Sri Lanka makes this intervention in relevance to agenda items 13.1, 13.2 and 14.

We note the report of the Independent Oversight and Advisory Committee on Health Emergencies, The Annual report of the implementation of the International Health Regulations and the Report by Director General on WHO's work in Health emergencies.

Sri Lanka emphasizes the importance of international travel although it is often triggering or fuelling transmission of COVID 19 across borders. We are exploring ways in which international travel can be resumed for which multi-lateral discussion needs to be encouraged. We welcome the support of the WHO and other Development partners to facilitate this much needed dialog.

Sri Lanka observes the emerging shift in the response, being for treatment and vaccines, whilst the thrust also remains for use of PPE and contact tracing and testing. We note that the importance of social distancing has to be captured in a different way as the New Normal, if economic activities are to be continued. Sri Lanka is currently experiencing a second wave of the epidemic and in our response, we have brought in new regulations under the quarantine legislation in the country to further strengthen prevention

measures. We highlight that the new normal be emphasized more than ever before.

We need to mention our great appreciation for the assistance received from the SEA Regional Director, in the current response. We deeply appreciate this support of our country in our hour of need to expand our testing capacities.

Our response to COVID-19 has been assisted with the foundation of primary care the country has at grass root level. Today we recognize ever more the importance of further strengthening the primary care response, as we note that universal access to vaccines will take time. In this protracted pandemic situation, we are taking every effort to build better our existing system and learn from member states, along with the guidance from WHO.

Thank you, Chair.