

Statement delivered by Zimbabwe on Agenda 18, Items considered by the Executive Board Budget (including on Budget matter; managerial, administrative and governance matters; and staffing matters)

Zimbabwe aligns its statement to the one made by Ghana on behalf of the Member States of the WHO Africa region. We thank the Director General for the reports under this Agenda item.

With regards to the Programme Budget 2020–2021, we call on the Secretariat to disseminate timely reports to Member States and that these be supplemented with updated information, which is disaggregated by major offices, segments, pillars, and outcomes. We further call for equity-based allocation of voluntary contributions and flexible funds to enable offices to fulfil their mandates, including through adequate staffing levels.

Concerning the commemoration of observances of Health days we agree that these can be useful tools to countries for health promotion and prevention on public health challenges, especially those that merit further attention in order to reinvigorate action and raise momentum. The related heavy financial costs for the Secretariat at all levels of the organisation and the related personnel challenges are well noted. We welcome the analysis and recommendations made by the Secretariat on the way forward. In light of the foregoing, we wish to place on record our support of the proposal for the establishment of a World Neglected Tropical Diseases Day, in the near future, as it fits the criterion proposed.

Based on the list of current observancies we did not identify mandates that are ready for sunseting. Consideration can be made in future to sunset days where there is eradication or elimination of a disease or on a area which would be considered to have been fully addressed.

We take note of the Human Resources Annual report, and stress the need for greater geographical representation, especially of underrepresented and non-represented countries.

On the Draft Global Strategy on Digital Health, we welcome thrust to strengthen health systems at country level. We, however, wish to note the existing disparities between regions and countries and indeed within countries. We call for technical support to enable countries to address existing challenges and shortcomings.

We also wish to stress that digital health while a useful tool should supplement and not substitute health systems strengthening. We call for enhanced attention to data sovereignty, privacy and safeguarding of public ownership of data in compliance with WHO 2020 Data Principles and the Framework of Engagement of Non State Actors (FENSA) which recognizes right of States to regulate data.