# STATEMENT
## delivered by H.E. Teymur Musayev
## Minister of Health of the Republic of Azerbaijan
## on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement at the
## 74th World Health Assembly
## Geneva, 24 May 2021

Mr. President,

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

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, worldwide solidarity and actions to address this challenge in an effective and timely manner.

Upon the initiative of the Azerbaijani NAM Chairmanship, the Contact Group in response to COVID-19 was set up, and on 4 May 2020, the online Summit-level Meeting of this Contact Group was held. In the Declaration adopted by the Summit level Meeting, 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 to the pandemic. Pursuant to the decision of the Meeting a Task Force was established to work out a database that would include the basic humanitarian and medical needs and requirements of the 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 and WHO Director General's efforts and coordinated actions to fight the pandemic, and acknowledges that preserving and strengthening the values of multilateralism, international cooperation and solidarity is fundamental to promoting and supporting all

three pillars of the United Nations.

The NAM takes note of the proposal to conclude a Pandemic Treaty and looks forward to receiving more details on the proposal and to the inclusive engagement of all Member States in the consultations. The NAM also notes the Joint WHO-China Report on the Origin of SARS-CoV-2, and express support for an apolitical and a science-based approach to the proposal to establish a WHO Hub for Pandemic and Epidemic Intelligence and invites the WHO Director General to share further information on its mandate, Terms of Reference, and funding arrangements. The NAM further welcomes the report of the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response and looks forward to further discussion on the findings and recommendations presented.

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.

The NAM Member States express their gratitude to all medical personnel and reiterate their readiness to continue collaborating with the WHO to ensure 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.

While global efforts are rightly focused on countering the immediate and devastating impacts of COVID-19, there is need going forward, for the international community to prioritize effective responses and to explore and adopt appropriate measures to ensure that the world is prepared for future pandemics.

The NAM Member States call upon States and other relevant stakeholders to remove unjustified obstacles restricting the export of COVID-19 vaccines, resulting in an unequal distribution in access to them between developed and developing countries, and to promote access to vaccines as a global public good, and the equitable global distribution and universal access to vaccines, in order to further the principles of international cooperation and solidarity, to end the current pandemic and to promote the realization of the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

In this regard, the Movement recalls with pleasure the resolution “Ensuring equitable, affordable, timely and universal access for all countries to vaccines in response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic” adopted by consensus at the 46th session of the UN Human Rights Council.

The NAM Member States welcomes the inclusion of the topic “Social determinants of health” in the WHA agenda. The current COVID-19 pandemic has exposed inequities and shortcomings all over the world and the challenges that we, as the international community, face in addressing international health emergencies, and more broadly the need to further strengthen health systems. In this regard, the NAM Member States welcomes the resolution that has been submitted on the Social Determinants of Health.

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 conclusion, the Non-Aligned Movement calls upon all States to spare no effort in transforming 2021 into the year of solidarity and renewed multilateral cooperation to effectively address the emerging global threats.

Thank you.