Statement by Bangladesh

74th World Health Assembly

Agenda Item 13.4: Global strategy and plan of action on public health, innovation and intellectual property; and Item 13.7: Standardization of medical devices nomenclature

Mr Chair,

The COVID-19 has again proved the importance, value and relevance of innovation to ensure timely, affordable and equitable access to medicines, vaccines and diagnostics. So, addressing the persisting challenges in the implementation of the ‘Global Strategy and plan of action on public health, innovation and intellectual property’ (GSPA-PHI) is essential.

In this respect, we would like to make a few points:

First, we understand that the lack of funding is the key impediment in the implementation of GSPA-PHI. WHO needs to make efforts to secure sustainable financing to ensure that GSPA-PHI can be an effective tool for innovation and access to medicines and other medical technologies.

Second, fair and equitable access to health products should be a global priority. The international response to the pandemic has also brought innovative ways into play, such as the ACT Accelerator, the COVAX Facility, and the C-TAP. However, these initiatives have not been effectively operational yet. We would like to see the full and effective operationalization of these initiatives through concerted global efforts based on solidarity and inclusiveness.

Third, the TRIPS flexibilities should be used to ensure that intellectual property rules do not hamper the development of local production capacity and the building of technological capacities. It also remains crucial that developed
countries provide incentive measures to their enterprises to transfer technology to the least developed countries for addressing the public health needs, as per Article 66.2 of the TRIPS Agreement.

And fourth, WHO must continue to make efforts for scaling up the production of vaccines, therapeutics, diagnostics and other medical equipment through compulsory or voluntary licensing to help the pharmaceutical industries across the world to get licenses, technologies and technical know-how to produce these items. We tend to agree with the recommendations of the review panel that opines that the intellectual property rights do not and should not prevent Member States from taking measures to protect public health.

Mr Chair,

  In connection to item 13.7, we underscore the global standardization of medical devices nomenclature system that should be based on scientific findings and international standard. In addition, global standardization must consider the diverse regulatory systems and manufacturing conditions in all Member States, so that it can be applied globally.

  I thank you, Chair.

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