REPUBLIC OF GHANA

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF HEALTH OF GHANA
HON. KWAKU AGYEMAN-MANU
ON
“ENDING THIS PANDEMIC, PREVENTING THE NEXT: BUILDING TOGETHER A HEALTHIER, SAFER AND FAIRER WORLD”

AT
THE 74TH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND
MAY, 2021
Mr. President

Distinguished delegates

Ghana joins other delegations in congratulating you on assuming the Presidency of the 74th World Health Assembly. We thank the DG for an insightful report and commend the Secretariat for a forward-looking theme that links how we end this pandemic with a vision for a healthier, safer and fairer world for the future.

We align with the joint statement made by the UHC 2030 Co-Chairs and UHC Movement Political Advisory Panel which notes among others that “to end this crisis and build a safer and healthier future, the world must act urgently in three linked areas: equitable access to COVID-19 tools, preparedness for future emergencies, and universal health coverage”.

Ghana welcomes the reports of the Independent Panel on Pandemic Response (IPPR), the IHR Review Committee and the Independent Oversight and Advisory Committee for the WHO Health Emergencies Programme (IOAC), all of which point to significant gaps in the current global and national health systems. We support the IPPR’s recommendation to elevate preparedness and response to the highest level of political leadership.

Mr. President,

It is encouraging to note that Ghana is seen as one of the countries that have managed the COVID-19 effectively. Despite its devastations, COVID-19 has had some positive implications for Ghana’s health sector, including:

- Behavior changes such as hand washing practices leading to reduced cholera infections;
- Greater attention to health system with high political will for health system investments leading to large-scale constructions of health care infrastructure projects and commencement of processes for setting up a Ghana CDC.
- Ignition of local production of health sector inputs such as PPEs etc, and ultimately vaccine production
Mr. President,

No country will be able to end the current pandemic alone. In that regard, Ghana reiterates its commitment to multilateral efforts to end the pandemic while forestalling those of the future. In the spirit of “never wasting a crisis”, we call for scale-up of Research and Development for medicines (including traditional medicines), therapeutics, diagnostics and vaccines to address supply chain constraints.

We support calls for a Waiver of Intellectual Property restrictions on COVID-19 vaccines and counter-measures to promote access.

We further support proposals for a new international treaty for pandemic preparedness and response to address weaknesses in the current global health governance system.

**In conclusion**, my delegation reiterates its recognition of WHO’s leadership role in coordinating global health, in setting global health norms and standards and for providing technical and operational support to countries such as Ghana, whose health system has benefited tremendously from such support.

We join calls for the full funding of the WHO Emergencies programme and for the ACT-Accelerator, including its vaccine pillar, the COVAX facility.

Thank you