REPUBLIC OF KENYA

74th WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

National Statement on Agenda 17.1: COVID-19 response

Thank you chair

1. Kenya aligns her statement with that made by Cote d'Ivoire on behalf of the African Member States.

2. We take note of the Director General's update report on the implementation of resolution WHA73.1 on the COVID-19 response as well as the summary of WHO's activities since January 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. We acknowledge that the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed weaknesses in national, regional and global pandemic preparedness and response systems, as well as vulnerabilities in public health systems worldwide.

4. However, the pandemic has also highlighted key strengths in our response systems, which we can built upon to strengthen future global pandemic preparedness and response mechanisms.

5. Following the declaration of Kenyan index case in March 2020, a government led national coordination system was established using a whole of government and whole of society approach. Additionally, diagnostics, surveillance systems and critical care services were strengthened nationally for early detection and management of infections. The government also put in place robust economic, social and public health measures aimed at interrupting the transmission of the virus and cushioning the population from the effects of the economic crisis.

6. We wish to acknowledge and appreciate the efforts of WHO, at the global, regional and country office level for providing valuable technical and operational support towards implementation of our national covid-19 Strategy.

7. To further interrupt transmission, the country has recently embarked on a nationwide covid-19 vaccination roll-out, which has so far vaccinated approximately one million high priority persons such as health care workers, people aged 58 years and above, vulnerable persons and other essential service providers.

8. While we applaud the unprecedented speed of vaccine development and approval processes to contain the pandemic, we are concerned about the rampant vaccine inequity and the current disruptions in the global vaccine supply chain systems, which have affected the smooth continuation of our national vaccination campaign.

9. We therefore agree with the IPPPR's recommended immediate actions to increase vaccine access to end the COVID-19 pandemic. In this regard, we urge COVAX to adopt a risk management approach that diversifies the portfolio and manufacturers substantially.

10. Finally, we request the Secretariat for an update on the outcome of the recent call for expressions of interest intended to promote regional and local manufacturing of COVID-19 vaccines.

11. I thank you