Thank you chair

1. Kenya aligns her statement with that made by Angola on behalf of the Africa Region Member States.

2. We thank the Director General for presenting the Report on enhancement of laboratory biosafety.

3. Concerned that weak biosafety and biosecurity systems could increase the risk of laboratory-acquired infections which can lead to outbreaks of epidemic-prone diseases, Kenya has taken deliberate steps to strengthen biosafety and biosecurity management, specifically through an enhanced coordination framework based on a One Health Approach, as well as capacity building at all health care levels through training, accreditation, and development of guidelines and procedures. We are also in the finalization stages of a national biosafety and biosecurity policy for the country.

4. In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Kenya continues to conduct Laboratory Biosafety and Biosecurity trainings to protect health personnel, patients and the environment against infectious agents as well as other hazards.

5. We support the recommendations for strengthening of national biosafety and biosecurity activities through increased financing,
provision of biosafety equipment and enhanced biosafety and biosecurity trainings at all levels.

6. Chair, turning to polio, we take note of the reports on Poliomyelitis eradication, Polio transition planning & polio post-certification.

7. Kenya is implementing routine polio vaccination and eradication activities in line with the Polio Eradication and Endgame Strategic Plan 2019–2023. The risk of importation of the vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 into the country remains high from neighboring countries where outbreaks continue to be reported. The country is currently responding to an outbreak of vaccine derived polio virus. To further address the risk of circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus, Kenya is in the final preparatory processes for the initiation of nationwide use of novel oral polio virus vaccine (nOPV).

8. It is worth noting that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has significantly disrupted routine immunization services, including polio vaccination activities, and may threaten some of the achievements of the programme.

9. Despite this, Kenya continues to strengthen surveillance and response activities for polio, as well as other vaccine preventable diseases including measles, neonatal tetanus, bacterial meningitis among others.

10. Finally, Chair, Kenya is concerned about the reducing funding for polio eradication activities to countries at risk of transmission, and requests the Secretariat to take specific actions to mobilize resources to facilitate Member States particularly In Africa, to sustain polio eradication activities, as well as to enable marginalized and vulnerable areas to catch up on implementing routine polio activities.

11. I thank you.