Thank you, Chair.

The Philippines appreciates the World Health Organization for including key progresses on Health, Environment and Climate Change, and updates on the Chemicals Road Map in this 74th World Health Assembly.

The National Environmental Health Action Plan (NEHAP) 2017-2022 is the country’s first inter-agency plan directed to address priority concerns. Two thematic working groups, air and water, have been collaborating for post-Taal Volcano eruption issues, that affected air quality and safety of drinking-water.

We continue to uplift the country’s high-level commitment to the WHO Global Strategy on Climate Change and Environment through:

- Successful turnover in Chairship of the Asia-Pacific Regional Forum on Health and Environment, to Indonesia as new Chair for 2020-2022; and
- Our submission of our country proposal, “Strengthening health sector resilience to climate change and disasters in the Philippines,” to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) that aims for climate-resilient environments, especially the most vulnerable sectors and communities.

Our response to Covid-19 underscored crucial environmental health efforts with the issuance of interim guidelines on disinfection, health care waste management, and disposal of human remains reflecting the importance of WASH in curtailing the pandemic.

As a member of the WHO Global Chemicals and Health Network (GCHN) and WHO Chemical Risk Assessment Network, the Department’s Chemical Safety in School Project, was shared in the WHO website and the GCHN SharePoint site. The country has designated Poison and Toxicology Control Centers, where one serves as the National Poison Management and Control Center, and another as Toxicology Referral and Training Center.

An order was also issued in the country resulting to the phase-out of lead in architectural, decorative and household and industrial paints. The Minamata Convention was finally ratified in the Philippines last 2020 but early implementation has been undertaken with issuances on Phase-out of Mercury in Dental Restorative Procedure, Management of Mercury-Added products and Mercury-containing wastes.
We look forward to a continuous, productive partnership with WHO, on developments relevant to the nexus of health, environment and climate change.

We also request the Director-General to report to the 76th World Health Assembly, the progress made, in implementing the Chemicals Road Map.