Chair,

Thank you for giving me the floor.

Sri Lanka wishes to congratulate the World Health Assembly and Member States for their commitment to strengthening and accelerating action on oral health. Sri Lanka with its co-sponsors Bangladesh, Bhutan, Botswana, Eswatini, India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Jamaica, Kenya, Myanmar, Peru, Qatar, Thailand and the Member States of the European Union, has proposed a resolution on Oral health and the 148th Executive Board of the WHO has recommended the adoption of EB 148. R1. Sri Lanka reaffirms its support for the adoption of EB 148. R1.

The initiative for a global strategy on oral health as part of the NCD and UHC agenda’s is much needed and urgent in view of 3.5 billion people suffering from oral diseases worldwide. Especially recognizing that these diseases are largely preventable and show definite inequalities across the world’s populations.

Optimum oral health is essential for health in general, including diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, cancer and other noncommunicable diseases. It is also elementary for healthy ageing.

Sri Lanka believes that the resolution reflects the importance of a preventive strategy in tackling oral diseases. After all they share many risk factors with other non-communicable diseases, for example, tobacco use and harmful use of
alcohol, high sugar consumption, poor hygiene and unhealthy dietary habits. All of these require a preventive approach.

Sri Lanka wishes to thank all the Member States for its support it received in bringing this resolution forward. It was a heartwarming experience and a sound basis for future cooperation. Because, the resolution is only the start and still a lot of work lays ahead of us to successfully integrate oral health into Global Health policies. Sri Lanka remains committed to further guide this process to a good end.

Finally, Sri Lanka congratulates the Director General of WHO and his team for coordinating this agenda item.

Thank you, Ayubowan.