TALKING POINTS (written statement):

- The United States strongly supports the External Auditor’s mission and appreciates the Auditor’s efforts over the last year. As we convene a second time during this COVID-19 pandemic, functions like the External Auditor are more critical than ever for a well-functioning and trusted WHO.

- We encourage the Organization to implement the 37 recommendations of the external auditor as soon as possible, especially in the areas where disclosures were “non-transparent,” there was a conflict of interest, and in cases of misconduct related to fraud, harassment, sexual misconduct, and non-compliance with professional standards.

- We note that the WHO did not depict its cash and short-term investments distinctly on its Statement of Financial Position, resulting in incomplete and non-transparent disclosure. We have also noted issues related to the selection and engagement of a consultancy firm., which was paid $2.53 million without “due approval” and constituted a “conflict of interest.” We have noted reports of technical deficiencies in the emergency procurement of Personal Protective Equipment, the “lack of objectivity in bid evaluation and selection of suppliers, and the inadequate documentation and lack of supplier performance evaluation.

- We have noted reports of an increasing trend of reported cases of misconduct, especially relating to fraud, harassment, non-compliance to professional standards and sexual misconduct as well as delays in investigation and disciplinary action. We would appreciate more information from the Secretariat about what is being done to address these essential areas.
Delegates from all Member States have recommitted to a strengthened and empowered WHO. It is essential that WHO dedicate sufficient resources to investigating and proactively addressing all cases of fraud, harassment, non-compliance to professional standards and professional misconduct for the reforms and strengthening of the organization to be successful.

WORD COUNT: (197)