STATEMENT BY THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA ON AGENDA ITEM 15: HEALTH WORKFORCE AND 16: COMMITING TO IMPLEMENTATION OF GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR WOMEN'S, CHILDREN'S AND ADOLESCENTS' HEALTH 2016-2030

Chairperson, Zambia aligns itself with the statement made by Algeria on behalf of the Africa Region on this agenda item.

As we note the two reports on Health Workforce and the draft global strategic directions for Nursing and Midwifery 2021–2025, we wish to make the following observations:

- In order for us to fight COVID-19 and ensure continuity of essential health services, the world must protect and invest in health and care workers. We therefore support the approach in the global strategy that support the empowerment of the world's health workforce to play its part through prioritized policies by governments and stakeholders.

Chairperson, our country has inadequate fiscal space in the national budget to adequately address its current deficit in health workforce requirements. We therefore support policies within the global strategy for the creation of a health and care workforce action plan and investment agenda that is relevant for 2022–2030, substantially increasing health financing and the recruitment, development, training and retention of the health workforce.

Chairperson, on item 16, Zambia is committed to the implementation of the Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health 2016-2030, and has seen significant improvements in some indicators, while there is stagnation and an upward trend in others, such as perinatal and neonatal mortality, overtime. We also have challenges in combating teenage pregnancies which have increased and remained unacceptably high.

We therefore relate to the highlights of the report that point to the need for more efforts despite the progress made. The truth still remains glaring in the high

negative outcomes which, without a doubt, point to the inequalities that are still obvious in our world, between the rich and the poor.

As individual countries continue to strengthen the health system and put in place measures to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and other pandemics, we wish to call for global solidarity and increased resources to go beyond the direct response to the pandemic and ensured continuity of essential RMNCAHN services, but for it to be the guiding principle as we move forward in the implementation of the Strategy.

Finally, Madam President, Zambia supports calls for development of a Roadmap to Ending Rheumatic Heart Disease.

I thank you