

REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

WHA74

STATEMENT BY THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA ON AGENDA ITEM 3 – ADDRESS BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL – GENERAL DEBATE

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

Zambia aligns with the statement by Benin delivered on behalf of the Africa Region. We thank the Director-General for the informative report. We also wish to echo the appreciation of the collaborative work of WHO and the Africa Union Commission in COVID-19 response. We further acknowledge with appreciation the various initiatives instituted by the Organisation in order to strengthen its mandate to timely detect, prevent, and effectively respond to public health emergencies with pandemic potential. We also fully support the call to developing the WHO pandemic treaty

Mr President, Zambia has so far recorded 93,201 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 1,267 combined direct COVID-19 and associated deaths as of 22 May 2021.

Zambia has been implementing a multisectoral COVID-19 Contingency and Response Plan developed with technical support from WHO and aligned to the Global Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan, which informs resource mobilisation and action. The Zambian Government, through the Zambia National Public Health Institute continues to coordinate COVID-19 surveillance to ensure timely detection and management of cases, and has gone further to coordinate with the education sector to implement a robust school surveillance, a critical step in preventing COVID-19 in institutions of learning.

Mr President, the shortages of essential commodities that continues to rock the low and middle income countries (LMIC) across the globe have the potential to undermine an effective response to interrupt transmission of COVID-19. While we note the more than 220 combined recommendations contained in the reports of the IHR Review Committee, the Independent Expert Oversight Advisory Committee and the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response, it is our considered view that unless the world matches together in solidarity and act in a way that leaves no one behind, the hope of defeating the virus will remain elusive. We note with concern that the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A), a well intended initiative that assures

equitable access to vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics, is being hampered by vaccine nationalism and a general lack of solidarity. We wish to encourage member states to support the efforts WHO secretariat as it takes the lead in this global cause.

I thank you.