

**STATEMENT OF THE HONOURABLE
MINISTER OF HEALTH, BRUNEI DARUSSALAM
AT THE 75TH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY,
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, MAY 2022**

**PLENARY THEME:
“HEALTH FOR PEACE, PEACE FOR HEALTH”**

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

and Good morning (afternoon)

*Mr President, Vice-Presidents, Honourable Ministers,
Director-General, Ladies and Gentlemen*

1. As we entered the second decade of the 21st century, the global community witnessed, once again, the devastating effects that an infectious agent causing mass disease and death.
2. Thanks to the efforts of scientists and healthcare workers around the world, we now have effective vaccines and therapeutics. Brunei Darussalam has made full use of these and we are one of the most highly vaccinated countries in the world with more

than 98% of our population having received 2 doses of COVID-19 vaccine, and almost 70% receiving 3 doses. Our supplies of antivirals are holding up, and we have begun our transition towards managing COVID-19 alongside other respiratory infections as an endemic disease.

3. At the same time, we realize that not all countries are in this position. The effective delivery of healthcare interventions and promotion of universal health coverage, requires the right social, political, and economic conditions. Peace and the absence of armed conflict are fundamental to our work for health.
4. With this in mind, Brunei Darussalam welcomes the theme of this plenary session and we fully support WHO's 'Peace for Health and Health for Peace' global initiative.
5. With regards to this, allow me to raise two specific points:
 - i. First, the COVID-19 pandemic has shown the precariousness of supply chains of essential medicines and other countermeasures. This remains a real threat, not just to health, but to peace and global security. While all countries have

their own domestic concerns, we should refrain from politicizing health, and even during crises we should remain guided by our core principle of universal health coverage.

- ii. Second, we have seen first-hand how misinformation and disinformation can destroy trust, affect health, and promote conflict. This infodemic must be tackled head on. As such, in Brunei Darussalam we have recently partnered with WHO to establish a Behavioural Insights Unit, precisely to better facilitate cohesion between government and civil society, hear grievances, and generate trust around health concerns.
6. In conclusion, Brunei supports a global health agenda that is comprehensive and universal. Successful delivery is contingent upon peace and stability, requiring leadership within and beyond the health sector to lay the foundation that advances human health and wellbeing.

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