



77th session of the World Health Assembly **Agenda item 11.1 "Universal health coverage"**

Statement by the representative of the Republic of Belarus

Distinguished Chairperson!

The key priorities of the Belarusian health-care system are:

- Improving the availability for all and effectiveness of health services;
- Ensuring that these services meet the current medical science standards and WHO recommendations;
- Creating a comprehensive preventive environment and health promotion throughout the life-course;
- Active involvement of the whole society in promoting healthy lifestyles.

We are grateful to the WHO for supporting the Healthy Cities project, covering more than 250 settlements in Belarus.

The existing network of health-care facilities ensures access to health care for all, whether urban or rural population.

The high number of hospital beds ensures the availability of hospital treatment.

As a result, Belarus had made progress towards achieving SDG 3. According to the latest national statistics, the coverage of essential health services is 87 per cent (SDG 3.8.1).

At the same time, we note with deep concern the problems associated with blocking the supply of certain medicines and medical equipment as a result of unilateral coercive measures imposed on the Republic of Belarus by a group of countries.

I will give just a few examples:

In January 2024, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan has refused to issue an export license for the delivery to Belarus of a batch of Japanese-made tuberculosis diagnostic testing systems.

Under the same pretext, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Canada blocked an export licence to supply gamma-therapy devices to Belarus

This equipment, which Belarus previously legally purchased from a Canadian manufacturer, is used for radiation therapy of cancer patients.

Since 2022, the American company 3M (Triple EM), which produces a wide range of medical products, suspended delivery to Belarus for an indefinite period.

Thermo Fisher Scientific, also headquartered in the US, refused to supply reagents and consumables for clinical laboratory diagnosis and research in Belarus.

These examples demonstrate that UCM (sanctions) affect the procurement of certain medical goods, lead to over-compliance and aggravate suffering for the most vulnerable patients.

The indiscriminate and inhumane nature of the unilateral coercive measures imposed on Belarus as well as on a number of other countries, is obvious, as is the ineffectiveness of the so-called "smart sanctions" and humanitarian exceptions.

The humanitarian and medical impact of any unilateral sanctions must be assessed. States should not shift responsibility to private companies by pushing them to overcompliance. Belarus calls to put an end to illegal UCM especially in the humanitarian sphere.

Thank you for your attention.