Statement of Dr. Jong Mu Rim, the Minister for Public Health, DPR Korea
(Full Text)

Dear Mr. President,

Firstly, let me extend, on behalf of the DPR Korea Delegation, my congratulations to you for having been elected as the President of the current Assembly, confident about its fruitful outcome under your seasoned chairmanship.

Mr. President,

Even after the global health crisis experienced by the humankind with extreme miseries and fear, various kinds of emerging sporadic communicable diseases, climate change, natural disasters and increasing conflicts not only impose socio-economic obstacles but also heavier health burden.

This reality severely hampers the realization of WHO triple billion targets by 2025(1 billion more people living with better health & well-being, 1 billion more people benefitting from UHC, 1 billion more people protected from health emergencies) and health targets of 2030 SDGs.

Our Delegation appreciates WHO’s endeavours resulted in a serious of achievements under the review period even in difficulties.

COVID-19 pandemic teaches us a lesson that protecting and saving human life should be transformed into the whole-of-state, whole-of-society agenda, not limited only to the medical institutions. In this vein, our Delegation welcomes the WHA theme “All for Health, Health for All”.

Mr. President,

Comrade Kim Jong Un, President of State Affairs, DPRK said that life protection & health promotion of whole people should be prioritized, thoroughly subjugating & gearing everything towards it, which is the physiology of our health.

Our DPRK Government, attaching people’s health & well-being as the top-most state priority, during the last year, upgraded different levels of treatment & prevention institutions, constructed National Center for Disease Prevention & Control, newly-built pharmaceutical factories, medical consumable factory and anti-epidemic supplies factory in many parts of the country, thus, enabling local production of medical supplies.

DPRK Government, this year, is vigorously progressing to improve the quality of medical services and consolidating health sector material-technological foundation through facilitating building & reconstruction of Pyongyang and other modern general hospitals, renovating pharmaceutical & medical equipment factories, constructing central Koryo traditional medicine
Meanwhile, exceeding Health Ministry’s TORs, whole-national system has been further completed and reinforced to guide & manage public health under the coordination of multi-sectoral Health Guidance Committee in the principles of policy & legal guarantee, governmental investment, whole-society attention and whole-population awareness.

Public Health Law, main health-sector law, Medical Service Law, Emergency Anti-epidemic Law, Non-smoking Law, Food Hygiene Law, Public Sanitation Law, Childcare Law, etc. have been amended/newly-enacted, mass sports exercises encouraged, and other activities are powerfully accelerated, effectively contributing to the protection & promotion of population health.

Mr. President,

A span of 76, 46 years has elapsed after the WHO’s foundation and adoption of Alma-Ata Health for All Declaration, however, it’s lamentable that 4.5 billions, over half of world population, are not yet accessible to the essential medical services.

In order to make our committed goals a reality, WHO needs to pay due attention to supporting member countries’ efforts in consolidating health system focusing on PHC in tally with their local settings with utmost priority on UHC by 2030.

WHO may also reinforce legal framework to assure the countries equitable access to capacity building, diagnosis & treatment, medical supplies in prevention, preparedness & response to the public health emergencies, finding lesson from the COVID-19 pandemic.

In this perspective, our Delegation supports WHO’s draft 14th general program of work allocating more budget to the country level and WHO’s efforts for development of new Pandemic Agreement and IHR amendment targeted to protect future generation from global pandemic while responding to health emergencies more rapidly and effectively.

Mr. President,

DPRK Government, as a dutiful host accountable for people’s health and well-being, is committed to constantly preserve and further improve our people-centered socialist health system, while, as a responsible member state of WHO, shall actively contribute to national & global health development.

Thank you.