



**Republic of the Gambia
Ministry of Health
The Quadrangle
Banjul**

SEVENTY-NINTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER, GENEVA 2026

Agenda Item H	Availability, safety and quality of blood products (decision WHA75(17) (2022))
Documents	Documents A79/26 and A79/26 Add.1
Requested action	Take note of the report
Time limit	3 MINS

Chairperson, Director-General, Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates,

The Gambia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Republic of Niger on behalf of the WHO African Region and thanks the Director-General for continued reporting on progress in this critical area of health systems strengthening.

Safe, sufficient, and quality-assured blood remains indispensable to effective service delivery. In The Gambia, it is essential for reducing maternal and neonatal mortality, managing severe malaria and anaemia, responding to trauma and emergencies, and ensuring access to surgical and medical care.

Our efforts align with the WHO African Region's integrated framework, focusing on governance, availability, safety and quality, and appropriate clinical use. The Gambia maintains a nationally coordinated blood system through the National Blood Transfusion Service and is establishing its first National Blood Transfusion Centre to strengthen oversight across the transfusion chain.

We continue to promote voluntary, non-remunerated blood donation through sustained community engagement and national awareness activities. In terms of safety and quality, 100 percent of donated blood is routinely screened for HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and syphilis, in line with WHO standards. We are also

strengthening quality management systems, haemovigilance, and digital information systems.

We recognize that safe blood must also be used judiciously and are reinforcing adherence to national transfusion guidelines and clinician training.

Despite progress, challenges remain, including sustaining donor pools, ensuring uninterrupted supplies, and maintaining skilled personnel. Addressing these requires predictable financing and continued technical cooperation.

In conclusion, The Gambia reaffirms its commitment to the full implementation of WHA decisions on blood safety and calls for continued WHO leadership to ensure equitable access to safe blood products for all by 2030.

I thank you.