

79th World Health Assembly (WHA79)

18th to 23rd May 2026



**Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
Government of India**

SEARO- RoV Statement

Agenda Item 12.4:

Universal health coverage-

- **Draft global strategy for integrated emergency, critical and operative care, 2026-2035**
- **Increasing availability, ethical access and oversight of transplantation of human cells, tissues and organs**
- **Rare diseases: a global health priority for equity and inclusion**

(Word Count: 286)

Thank you, Chair,

India has the honour to speak on behalf of the Member States of the WHO South-East Asia Region.

The Region welcomes the Director-General's report and the Draft Global Strategy for Integrated Emergency, Critical and Operative Care 2026–2035.

For our Region, Universal Health Coverage will remain incomplete unless every person can access timely emergency, critical and operative care without suffering financial hardship.

Across our countries, non-communicable diseases, mental health conditions and cardiovascular emergencies are rapidly reshaping the public health landscape. They are not only causing premature mortality and long-term disability, but are also pushing millions of families into poverty through high out-of-pocket expenditure.

The South-East Asia Region therefore underscores that integrated emergency, critical and operative care must be recognized as an essential pillar of resilient health systems and a core pathway towards Universal Health Coverage.

Member States are strengthening people-centric systems that connect communities, integrated primary healthcare, ambulance services, district hospitals and specialized centres of care. We are investing in building competencies of frontline health workers, digital and telehealth solutions, early diagnosis, continuity of care and financial protection mechanisms, particularly for vulnerable and underserved populations.

While recognizing the importance of transplantation services and rare diseases, the Region emphasizes the need for ethical governance, balanced, context-sensitive and sustainable approaches that maximize equity and population health impact.

We call upon WHO to continue supporting Member States through technical cooperation, capacity-building, interoperable digital systems, standardized indicators and strengthened regional knowledge-sharing platforms to accelerate implementation of integrated emergency and critical care systems and UHC progress.

The South-East Asia Region remains steadfast in its commitment to building resilient health systems where no person is denied timely, affordable and lifesaving care at the moment it is needed most.

[Thank you.](#)