Statement by Government of Bangladesh

148th Session of WHO Executive Board
Date: Thursday, 22 January 2021

Item 19.3: WHO global disability action plan 2014–2021: better health for all people with disability

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

02. We thank the Secretariat for sharing the report. We recognize that the WHO global disability action plan 2014-2021 has been a significant step towards achieving better health for people with disabilities.

Mr. Chair,

03. Globally one in every seven people today lives with some form of disability, the majority in low- and middle-income countries. In the wake of a health emergency, the persons with disabilities are the most vulnerable and neglected. It is encouraging to see that the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is supporting disability-inclusive COVID-19 responses and recovery at the national level. We also reiterate that in support of the global response to COVID-19, rehabilitation and palliative care facilities can play an important role in providing a better chance of succeeding in life for people with disabilities.

04. The Government of Bangladesh was one of the first countries to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. We are making strong efforts to strengthen our health system towards universal health coverage by
improving access to general health services for all people with disabilities. We also recognize the importance of collecting periodic data on disability for reflecting the needs of people with disabilities in health services.

Mr. Chair,

05. We wish to make five points:

First, as the global disability action plan 2014–2021 is coming to an end, we propose to consider developing an action plan for the period 2021 -2030 for Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology.

Second, WHO must continue its commitment to promote disability inclusion in the health sector through the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy.

Third, WHO and other international partners need to work for improving global access to assistive products and support Member States in devising national policy and programmes for access to assistive products.

Fourth, WHO must support Member States in strengthening their capacity by providing comprehensive training to the service providers of the persons with disabilities.

Fifth, universal health coverage policies must include health services such as rehabilitation and palliative care responding to the needs of people with disabilities.

I thank you, Chair.

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