Statement by the Government of Bangladesh

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

Item-8: Global strategy and plan of action on public health, innovation, and intellectual property

Thank you, Mr. Chair,

We thank the Director-General for his report on the implementation of the decision.

Advancing the implementation of the ‘Global Strategy and plan of action on public health, innovation and intellectual property’ (GSPA-PHI) along with the recommendations of the review panel is a critical issue in the context of ensuring timely, affordable and equitable access to medicines, vaccines and diagnostics. The COVID-19 has again proved the importance, value and relevance of their implementation, including through measurable indicators.

Bangladesh attaches high importance to all recommendations in the plan, in particular, those on technology transfer, building and improving innovative capacity, managing intellectual property, improving delivery and access and sustainable financing. Progress in these areas is significant not only to diseases that disproportionately affect low and middle income countries, but also for non-communicable and infectious diseases like COVID-19.

We understand that the lack of funding is the key impediment in the implementation of GSPA-PHI. But, financing should no longer be an obstacle for delayed implementation. Appropriate budget allocation, including through core budget financing should be made available by WHO for the implementation.

The recommendations of the review panel on promotion of sustainable financial mechanisms could be an effective way forward. We need to explore the possibility of newer incentivisation models, including the pull and push mechanisms. The prices of health technologies should also be separated from the research and development costs.
Mr. Chair,

We believe that pharmaceutical local production should be rightly placed as a strategic tool, as we learnt from the pandemic. The TRIPS flexibilities should be used to ensure that intellectual property rules do not hamper the development of local production capacity and building of technological capacities. It also remains crucial that developed countries provide incentive measures to their enterprises to transfer technology to the least developed countries for addressing the public health needs, as provided for under Article 66.2 of the TRIPS Agreement.

To conclude, the document EB148/10 does not provide a detailed report on the status of implementation of the recommendations. We look forward to having an elaborate report at the next World Health Assembly.

I thank you.

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