Thank you, Chairperson

1. Kenya aligns this statement with that delivered by Gabon on behalf of the African Member States.

2. Like most countries, Kenya adopted a whole-of-society approach to promote, protect and care for mental health, as an essential component of National COVID-19 response through various Mental Health and Psychosocial Support activities. Under this initiative, social welfare assessment and reintegration of people in quarantine and isolation back to their communities was also supported.

3. Furthermore, Kenya also developed mental health and psychosocial support guidelines for public health emergencies. In this regard, Psychological First Aid training was prioritized for COVID-19 response teams and frontline workers, as well as community health volunteers and assistants to strengthen MHPSS response at community level.

4. Chairperson, The mental duress and anguish caused by the pandemic has severely affected lives and livelihoods, and had catastrophic impacts on our citizens. This has brought to the fore the need for more investment into management of Mental Health. Kenya therefore calls for WHO, Member States and all international actors to work together to highlight the state of Mental Health Support in Health Management.

5. Kenya commits to continue its daily communication updates on COVID-19, strengthening of the community-based psychosocial support for the COVID-19 affected persons and to increase access to quality, affordable care for mental health conditions within health and social services, as envisioned under the government’s Universal Health Coverage Agenda.

6. In conclusion Chairperson, Kenya welcomes the proposed strategic objectives and activities to reduce suffering, promote human rights and improve the mental health of all people affected.
7. Kenya stands ready to support the process and requests the Director General to ensure that the Mental Health needs and support is adequately captured in the next budget. Finally, we thank Thailand for their initiative in proposing a resolution on Mental Health and COVID-19 and request to be listed as a co-sponsor of this resolution.

8. I thank you.