1. Thank you Chair.

2. Kenya aligns her statement with that made by Burkina Faso on behalf of the Member States of the African Region.

3. We thank the Director General for his report on meetings of expert committees and study groups, and we commend the work done by the respective panels in providing the knowledge base for global and national public health policy and guidance.

4. We also take note of the DG’s report on the membership of WHO’s Expert advisory panels and committees and wish to express concern regarding the imbalance in regional representation for almost all panels and committees. Such skewed representation starves the global health community of varied experiences and knowledge demonstrates a lack of commitment to diversity and inclusion.

5. Chairperson, with regards to the WHO Study Group on Tobacco Product Regulation, Kenya welcomes the recommendations that will ensure a more robust regulatory framework for all tobacco products. This includes novel products that are currently subverting existing laws and regulations such as electronic nicotine delivery systems and Non-tobacco Nicotine products. If left unaddressed, these new products could reverse the gains made due to the much stronger and calculated targeting of younger generations by the tobacco industry.

6. Kenya appreciates the progress made by WHO in this area and urges the Secretariat to continue prioritizing the provision of authoritative guidance to member states on the gains made in tobacco product regulation.

7. In the past, Kenya has participated in WHO technical working group on tobacco product testing and has gained much experience in tobacco control regulation. We are honored that WHO has identified three laboratories in Kenya to serve the AFRO region in testing of tobacco products, with the aim of integrating these labs into the global tobacco laboratories Network.

8. As a leading example in the implementation of the WHO-FCTC, Kenya calls for the prevention and management of tobacco and treatment of tobacco dependence to be made a top priority agenda by the WHO and the World Health Assembly.
9. The work of WHO in this area is critical and will contribute to further accelerating the implementation of the WHO FCTC, the SDGs and the Global Action Plan for addressing the burden of NCDs.

10. I thank you.