Agenda item 14.1: COVID-19 Response
document EB148/16

**ACTIONS PROPOSED:** The Board is invited to note the Director-General’s report on updates on the Secretariat’s activities to combat the pandemic of coronavirus (COVID-19)

**PHILIPPINE INTERVENTION:**

Thank you, Chair.

The Philippines expresses appreciation for the updates given today on COVID-19 and the response effort from the global perspective. We appreciate as well the efforts placed towards support for making COVID-19 vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics accessible in an equitable manner and remain supportive of the Solidarity efforts in this regard.

The Philippine delegation is proud of the work of our compatriots throughout the world, especially those in the migrant domestic and health workforce, who have been actively engaged in the various frontlines of the fight against COVID-19 in their host countries. With this, allow us to emphasize that support to risk communication and community engagement is very critical in ensuring that medical professionals are fully equipped on vaccine administration advocating the vaccination program, and in countering misinformation and disinformation surrounding vaccines.

We also highly appreciate the technical and operational guidance on maintaining essential health services in the context of COVID-19. The Philippines fights COVID-19 while pushing our Universal Health Care agenda forward, to ensure holistic health care and adequate health system capacities.

We value the different WHO platforms for imparting country responses. We have approached the response in our national context through an inter-health facility referral system, the One Hospital Command Center. The mechanism addresses the difficulty in getting patients transferred because of surge of cases being admitted in different hospitals and quarantine Facilities. Through our continued collaboration with the WHO, among others, we hope to suppress the transmission of COVID-19 in our country, addressing emerging issues and protect our vulnerable population through equitable access to vaccines.

Thank you.