Agenda item 14.2:
• Strengthening WHO’s global emergency preparedness and response
• Strengthening preparedness for health emergencies: implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005)


PROPOSED ACTIONS:
To note the reports on: (1) WHO Grade 3 emergencies, United Nations Inter-Agency Standing Committee Level 3 emergencies, and public health emergencies of international concern that required a response by WHO between 1 January and 31 August 2020; the methodology and the implementation and findings of the Surveillance System for Attacks on Health Care; and possible complementary mechanisms to be used by the Director-General to alert the global community about the severity and/or magnitude of a public health emergency in order to mobilize necessary support and to facilitate international coordination; (2) Interim progress report of the Review Committee on the functioning of the International Health Regulations (2005) during the COVID-19 Response; and (3) Progress by the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response

PHILIPPINE INTERVENTION:

Thank you, Chair.

The Philippines thanks the Secretariat for the reports on strengthening WHO’s global emergency preparedness and implementation of IHR2005.

IHR notification, through the National Focal Point, is the main communication with WHO for verification of events, consultation and risk assessment advice. Sharing of information was successfully implemented especially on outbreaks in international cruise ships. However, the limited authority of the National IHR Focal Points often leads to delays in notification.

Hence, we are proud to impart that two legislations were proposed in the country --- (1) the Establishment of a Philippine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and (2) the National Health Security Act -- to establish systems among different agencies for effective public health response for pandemics and other events of public health concern. Essentially, this will strengthen whole-of-government approaches to support IHR implementation for emergency public health threats.

We are grateful for WHO's Global Polio Eradication Initiative support to current Polio outbreak in the Philippines by providing technical and human resource support in AFP surveillance; and for WHO’s logistic and technical support when severe typhoons resulted to devastation and population displacement during the pandemic. The Philippines is also one of the countries where the Health Resources and Services Availability Monitoring System was reinforced to provide vital information on health system capacities, gaps and priorities to support the response to COVID-19.

We encourage other governments, even those with limited capacities to contribute financially, to consider supporting the Contingency Fund for Emergencies so that there will be ready support to respond to emergencies.

Thank you.