The global health sector strategies on, respectively, HIV, viral hepatitis and sexually transmitted infections, for the period 2016–2021
Agenda Item 19.3

UNITED STATES WRITTEN STATEMENT

- The United States is pleased to cosponsor the draft decision on the global health sector strategies on HIV, viral hepatitis, and sexually transmitted infections, and we applaud the direct reference to alignment with the strategies of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria and UNAIDS.

- For the first time, we have the opportunity to achieve HIV epidemic control without a vaccine or a cure.

- The United States has shown immense leadership in HIV; globally PEPFAR has seen a 41%-76% decline in new HIV infections. Despite these gains, continued work is needed to better understand who is left behind and how best to reach them. The next strategy must be grounded in the core of how to interrupt and stop HIV transmission and how to support living strong with HIV, with a focus on populations and locations with high HIV incidence and high risk of infection.

- In support of the WHO recommendation to “Treat All”, it is imperative to make sure HIV-positive individuals receive, testing, treatment, and high quality care and prevention services including, pre-exposure prophylaxis.
• On the Viral Hepatitis Strategy, we are encouraged by the progress in treatment coverage for both hepatitis B and hepatitis C virus infections. We urge continued collaboration across many sectors to increase the availability of low-cost antiviral treatment.

• In 2019, only 43% of children globally were vaccinated with a birth dose of hepatitis B vaccine. WHO should work with member states to prioritize and promote the importance of introduction and increased coverage of the birth dose of hepatitis B vaccine.

• Lastly, as it relates to sexually transmitted infections, we commend the outstanding progress made on global elimination of congenital syphilis. We encourage WHO to continue to support program integration and coordination of services for the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis, supporting quality antenatal care and delivery services. These are important in preventing mother to child transmission of HIV and syphilis, and have the potential benefits of reducing other maternal and perinatal morbidity and mortality.

• Global shortages of benzathine penicillin are a real concern. This is an issue that requires multisectoral action and WHO should ensure all stakeholder voices come to the table to make recommendations to support the availability of this essential medication.