



## Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN Geneva

### Statement

**Mr. Tahir Hussain Andrabi, Ambassador/DPR**

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**Agenda item 14: “*International Health Regulations (2005)*”**

**Mr. Chairman,**

The realization of the basic human right to health is dependent on a resilient, strong and well-coordinated health system capable of responding efficiently to the needs of the population especially in public health emergencies and disasters. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the vulnerabilities and demonstrated that weak health systems anywhere heighten the risk of disease outbreaks everywhere.

Pandemics are not just a threat to human health; they are a threat to societies and economies. That there will be another pandemic is not a question of “if”, but a question of “when”. Economic downturn from COVID pandemic, rising population and the changing climate will increasingly test and perhaps disrupt, once again, our national health care systems. The international community needs to come together and shape a global health agenda that responds effectively to present and emerging challenges, including future pandemics.

In the context of our future work on International Health Regulations, Pakistan delegations would underscore following:

**Firstly**, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for effective emergency preparedness and developing IHR core capabilities to deal with future incidents. To address the global public health emergency architecture, we need to determine short, medium, and longer-term priorities and responses.

**Secondly**, the existing level of international collaboration and assistance needs to be scaled up and aligned with national efforts meaningfully in order for all countries to develop strong resilient, and integrated health systems. Such systems require adequate and sustained availability of sufficient number of trained health workers, availability and affordability of medicines, robust health information systems, including surveillance, appropriate infrastructure, sufficient public financing and a strong public sector to deliver equitable and quality services.

**Thirdly**, we need to invest in strong routine immunization systems that strengthens global health security in ways that prevent outbreaks in the first place and build the national and sub-national infrastructure required to detect and respond in the event of an outbreak.

**Finally**, the discourse on IHR must embed the focus on technical assistance, financing and capacity building to allow developing countries to achieve their social and public health goals. More importantly, factors outside of the health sector which shape human wellbeing, particularly climate change and demographic pressures need critical attention.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The international community must work together for the acceleration of production, access and availability of essential medicines and pandemic vaccines, equitably and universally. These products ought to be declared global public goods. Undue monopolies and nationalization of COVID vaccines have the potential to further undermine global progress in achieving the SDGs.

True measure of international solidarity will inevitably be in walking the talk.

Thank You.