



Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN **Geneva**

Statement by Pakistan at the 70th Session of the World Health Assembly **(22-31 May 2017, Geneva)**

Mr. President
Dr Margaret Chan, Director General, WHO
Honourable Ministers,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mr. President,

It is my proud privilege to be in the midst of such a distinguished audience.

Pakistan adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in February 2016 through a unanimously passed parliamentary resolution as National Goals for sustainable social development of the Nation which reflects complete National ownership and commitment. Under the spearhead of Ministry of Planning, Development and Reforms, Pakistan's Vision 2025 for development is completely aligned with SDGs. In line with National Vision 2025 and SDGs framework Government of Pakistan developed National Health Vision 2016-25 as a strategic road map for prosperous and healthy Pakistan. The country marked enormous progress in terms of setting up strategic and institutional mechanisms to achieve and monitor SDGs. These mechanisms include National SDGs taskforce of Parliamentarians; SDGs cells at the federal and provincial levels for cross-sectoral coordination.

Mr. President,

Our National Health Vision as key policy achievement after adaptation of SDGs emphasizes improving the health of all Pakistanis, particularly women and children by providing universal access to affordable, quality essential health services. Our National Health Vision is an enabling framework to achieve unmet agenda of MDGs while addressing critical health challenges in Pakistan including high rates of communicable and non-communicable diseases, polio epidemic and other virus bone outbreaks, Maternal and Child health issues, malnutrition leading to maternal and child mortality, efficiency and accountability of the health system affecting availability and quality of health services, health financing and divide between public and private healthcare delivery.

Mr. President,

Substantial efforts are being made in Pakistan to strengthen health system response and Universal Health Coverage. In accordance with the vision of our Prime Minister the largest ever health program in the history of the country was launched in December 2015 for provision of top-quality health services to the poorest of the poor. The Program being implemented in phases across the country so far benefitting one million families. Under directions of the Prime Minister, the program will Insha'Allah cover the entire country by June 2018. According to independent survey of the patients treated under this program, the patient satisfaction rate is 92 percent.

In order to strengthen health system capacity for health research, data availability and monitoring of relevant health indicators need to be scaled up with the help of partners. Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2017-18 is being planned integrating SDGs targets and indicators for health.

Mr. President,

Pakistan has made tremendous progress in polio eradication surmounting major challenges of insecurity and inaccessibility under the

leadership of our Prime Minister and with the strongest of political commitment.

We are encouraged that the turnaround has been recognized by recently held Independent Monitoring Board Meeting in London.

Mr. President,

We recognize that vaccination is the most successful and cost-effective public health intervention in the children against Vaccine Preventable Diseases. Our vision is to improve the health of the Pakistani children by eradicating, eliminating and controlling vaccine preventable diseases. Government of Pakistan in the past few years has been working very hard for provision of quality service delivery in immunization to achieve the desired equitable coverage of routine immunization. It is pertinent to highlight that the Government commitment for Expanded Programme on immunization is at highest possible level at this moment with the highest level of budgetary allocation by Federal and Provincial Government. It is for first time the Government of Pakistan with the technical assistance of World Bank has developed single financing mechanism for immunization programme i.e. Multi Donors Trust Fund (MDTF) under National Immunization Support Project (NISP).

Mr. President,

Major reforms have been introduced over the last two years in drug regulations with the objective to provide affordable and quality drugs to our people. For the first time in Pakistan, a comprehensive and futuristic Drug Pricing Policy introduced by this government has been implemented. The policy eliminates all discretionary powers in fixation of prices and allowing for reduction in drugs prices. Sweeping reforms have resulted in major enhancement in registration of Pharmaceutical products in the country by around 73. Exports in the pharmaceutical sector have seen a sharp increase as a result of conducive environment and transparent procedures and policies.

For the first time in the country's history, Barcoding of pharmaceutical products has been introduced. The initiative will be useful tool to combat influx of spurious and counterfeit drugs in the market and

will act as a deterrent for retailers and distributors. It will also boost industry's ability to export products with international compliance.

Mr. President,

The implications of the SDGs on WHO's work is immense. The integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals provides an opportunity to pursue a more active role in addressing the various health determinants.

I wish the Seventieth World Health Assembly great success in its deliberations.

Thank you.
