



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

Statement

**Update on the implementation of Resolution WHA73.1 COVID-19
Response Special Session of the Executive Board
5-6 October 2020**

Mr. Chairman,

The Government of Pakistan considers implementation of International Health Regulations (IHR 2005) as priority agenda for national as well as global health security. It is fully aware that sustained efforts are needed to strengthen the existing core public health capacities, potential hazards and events at Points of Entries to contain and mitigate the threats of public health emergencies of international concern and those with pandemic potential like COVID-19. We believe that timely detection, identification and adapted response to the public health events of national and international concern is integral to the IHR implementation. The systemic approach adopted in this regard is within the context of Universal Health Coverage and to build resilient public health systems which can respond to the challenges.

Mr. Chairman,

Like most of the countries, the health system in Pakistan was seriously challenged following emergence of the first COVID-19 cases by the end of February 2020. However, the country made an effective response to control the spread of COVID-19 pandemic despite meagre financial resources and limited health sector capacities. We consider converting COVID19 crisis to an opportunity and intend to emerge out of it with a transformed health system fully capable of tackling health security issues.

Pakistan has put up a strong coordinated whole of government response, to fight COVID-19 emergency and established a National Coordination Committee (NCC) for policy and decision making while working in close coordination with provinces on daily basis through National Command &

Control Centre. It took Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions (NPIs), earmarking of financial allocation from domestic resources, tax exemptions for the import of essential equipment and supplies as well as support (food and monetary support) for most vulnerable segment of population. A Fiscal Stimulus Package of PKR 50 Billion was provided to Health and an additional PKR 25.3 Billion to National Disaster Management Authority for supporting COVID response across the country. Further, PKR 70 billion has also been allocated in the current fiscal year to strengthen core capacities and enhancing critical care capacity.

Mr. Chairman,

Pakistan's response to the COVID-19 outbreak includes; containment strategy which comprised of an effective mix of restrictive measures such as smart lockdowns, suspension of international and domestic travel, banning of large public gatherings, closure of schools and markets, early quantification and efforts to supply the needed PPEs, ramping up of ICU bed capacity/isolation beds and quarantine facilities, scaling up of lab testing, surveillance using the Polio Program, traditional as well as IT based contact tracing, effective communication strategy as well as planning and implementation of adequate social protection.

By collective efforts, Government was able to overcome the first peak of pandemic and reduce the morbidity and mortality. The Government of Pakistan is keen to ensure that all preparedness and response measure are in place to mitigate the impact of second wave of the pandemic in the country using a risk-based approach.

Thank you.