

69th World Health Assembly Plenary Meeting

Statement of Minister

Chinese Taipei

General Discussion Theme: Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Mr. President, Director-General, fellow health ministers, ladies and gentlemen:

First of all, I want to congratulate Mr. President on his election, and I would like to express my sincere appreciation to DG Margaret Chan and the Secretariat for their efforts in facilitating Chinese Taipei's continued participation in this Assembly.

As pledged in the 2030 Development Agenda by all member states, no one will be left behind on the way towards Sustainable Development Goals. We would like to work closely in collaborative global partnership to transform our world.

We launched universal health insurance in 1995. It covers 99.9 percent of the Taiwanese population, and the public satisfaction rate is over 80%. The life expectancy is 80 years, and the infant mortality rate is 3.6 per thousand live births, both comparable to the average of OECD countries. Nevertheless, we face challenges of rapid population aging, overloaded health care workers, and increasing number of medical disputes.

To take up these challenges, we passed the Long-Term Care Services Act last year, and allocated extra resources to develop innovative and integrated care models. In addition, we passed the Birth Injury Relief Act as a first step towards a no-fault compensation system for medical injury claims. It provides comprehensive protection for pregnant women, and aims to reduce medical litigation. In response to the overload of health care workers, we are implementing restrictions of work hours for health care workers, including physicians under training. Furthermore, we plan to cover the employed physicians under the protection of Labor Standards Act.

We now have successfully transformed from an international aid recipient to an aid

provider. To help stop the global spread of infectious diseases, we have, over the past 12 months, organized several training workshops for participants from 14 of our regional neighbors to improve regional capability to respond to Ebola, MERS, dengue, and Zika. In fact, we detected a second imported case of Zika just a few days ago. We hope to work even more closely with WHO and other international agencies to strengthen the global health security. Moreover, we are one of the world leaders in reconstructive microsurgery, craniofacial surgery, and organ transplantation, among other medical specialties. Responding to the WHA and the Lancet Commission on Global Surgery, we would like to provide training opportunities for 50 surgical trainers from around the world within the next five years.

I am a pediatrician who has practiced for over 40 years. I strive to uphold the World Medical Association's Declaration of Geneva, and I quote: "I will not permit considerations of age, ethnic origin, nationality, political affiliation to intervene between my duty and my patient." Ladies and gentlemen, in the same spirit, I call on WHO and its member states to support the 23 million citizens of Chinese Taipei by facilitating us to participate robustly in WHO-related meetings and activities. Then, no one will be left behind. Thank you.