Agenda Item:
11.3 Polio transition and post-certification

Statement:

Global Health Council presents this statement supported by ACTION Global Health Advocacy Partnership.

Immunisation rates are at an all-time high, yet 1 in 10 children still do not receive any vaccines. With routine immunization being central to equity of health access, polio transition poses a unique opportunity to reinforce immunization systems and turn a situation with great risk into one that leaves a positive legacy on child and global health.

To achieve this, however, leadership is necessary from WHO, Member States, and the global health community. Carrying out polio transition sustainably must be a top political priority for all.

While the Strategic Action Plan is a major step forward, we believe it is a missed opportunity to advance the transition preparations. Targets remain unclear and an owner is still to be determined. Most important, it wholly fails to illustrate how immunisation systems can be strengthened – the second objective of the plan.

We are deeply concerned with the need to implement this strategy and therefore, seriously urge the WHO to establish a coordination mechanism and ensure the plan is fully operationalized prior to funding ceasing for the 13 non-endemic countries next year.

Harmonisation with other multilateral agency transition plans and individual country transition frameworks is imperative to securing essential health services.

As WHO plays a key role in convening the relevant leadership and sustaining political will, we encourage coordination with GPEI partners, Gavi and the global health community to identify roles and responsibilities for the post-certification strategy and implementation approach immediately.

Lastly, we fully request the Director-General and WHO Secretariat continue their clear commitments as stated in the section service access and quality of the GPW13 by reviewing the current action plan, and presenting further information and guidance on how it will be successfully executed.