



**MEDIA STATEMENT
BY THE MINISTER OF HEALTH
ON THE THIRD UNITED NATIONS HIGH LEVEL MEETING ON NON-
COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

NEW YORK, Sept 27 - I am grateful today for the opportunity to once again, represent Malaysia at the United Nations and this time, addressing our country statement at the Third United Nations High Level Meeting on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs).

Trade liberalisation has transformed the policy landscape of international economic relations and an adverse outcome is the globalisation of unhealthy lifestyles and marketing of tobacco, alcohol, and unsafe food that are the drivers and risk factors for NCDs.

In many cases, international trade and investment agreements override national health policies by restricting the regulatory space for countries to implement policies for the prevention and control of NCDs.

Trade and health objectives need not be mutually exclusive. The challenge however is in the development of strategies to ensure that trade and health are mutually reinforcing.

This can be achieved through coherent policy actions across government agencies by creating synergies to achieve the agreed objectives.

In 2006, the World Health Assembly adopted Resolution WHA59.26 on international trade and health. In line with this resolution, we urge all Member states that health be made a central theme in bilateral, regional and multilateral trade agreements.

Constructive and interactive dialogues must be created and maintained between health, finance, trade and other key stakeholders.

Health Ministries must strengthen capacity building at the national level, in both leadership and advocacy roles, to address public-health related aspects of international trade; to track and analyse the potential opportunities and challenges of trade and trade agreements for health sector performance and health outcomes.

Technologies emerging from the fourth industrial revolution will also play an immense role in building the future of healthcare.

Digital health can be a powerful tool in revolutionising how NCDs care can be delivered by expanding access, improving efficiency and training less skilled health workers.

Of significant importance is the empowerment of patients managing their own disease that is created by connected devices, apps and digital solutions at large. Malaysia welcomes the joint WHO-ITU "Be He@lthy Be Mobile" initiative, and Resolution WHA71.7 on digital health, adopted in 2018.

We should build on existing initiatives and current scientific evidence on digital health, to support NCD prevention and management.

We want to see the WHO-ITU initiative assist governments create safe and sustainable programs. Digital health also provides the opportunity for the private sector, particularly those not typically associated with health, to be a strategic partner in health and delivery of healthcare.

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