

**Statement made by Dr. Myint Htwe, Union Minister for Health and Health and Sports,
Myanmar at the high-level meeting on UHC "Universal Health Coverage: Moving together
to build a healthier world"**

United Nations, New York

23rd SEPTEMBER 2019

- Dear Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,
- It is my distinct privilege and honor to witness this significant moment in our global community, 'The UNGA high-level meeting on UHC'.
- Many countries are on their way to achieve UHC.
- We need to refer to strategies and interventions from those countries which are far ahead in attaining UHC and having had similar epidemiological situations and developmental status.
- The good and not-so-good experiences should preferably be shared among countries through a regularly conducted forum. Because these experiences genuinely reflect the ground reality.
- Applying relevant and realistic parameters pertaining to UHC for effectively assessing whether we are on the right path or not to achieve UHC is crucial.
- Myanmar is, therefore, giving top priority to strengthen the Health Information System especially analysis and feedback to lower-level responsible health staff of the healthcare delivery system.
- Myanmar is moving ahead with well-formulated 'National Health Plan (2017-2021)', emphasizing on providing 'Basic Essential Package of Health Services' to the entire population.
- MMR is setting up a new governance body to oversee UHC processes so that appropriate changes in direction or balancing the health interventions can be made, as necessary,
- Honorable delegates,
- MMR is giving undivided attention to increasing the health literacy level of the population on UHC because occurrences of many diseases are related to health knowledge and practice of the population.

- To improve the health literacy of the population, eight-inch internet- connected tablet phones are being distributed to all basic health service staff, Station Medical Officers and Township Medical Officers in the Country. A total of 26,000 tablet phones will be distributed by the end of November 2019.
- It includes updated SOPs and guidelines on public health, information on diseases and related conditions, and treatment modalities produced by the Ministry of Health and Sports.
- It also contains a 330-page standardized health messages book.
- The contents of the tablet phones are being updated from the central level on a real-time basis.
- The basic health service staff are now conducting village-level health talks with a small group of families in a very informal manner discussing health issues.
- This is also the fastest way to enhance the capacity and capability of basic health service staff to render quality health care to the population.
- Through the use of these tablet phones, we are conducting quick surveys, monitor essential drugs availability, out-of-pocket expenses for health care and many other activities. These are ingredients for consideration to achieve UHC.
- Central level health professional are well connected 24/7 with basic health service staff like an umbilical cord between fetus and mother. This has many positive implications on our path to UHC.
- Myanmar is promoting the notion of ‘Exercise is Medicine’ in the whole country to have ‘national fitness’ and to reduce the quantum of NCD especially diabetes and hypertension on our path to UHC.
- MMR strongly felt the crucial role of ‘implementation research’ on UHC especially on quality care and out-of-pocket expenses and also to know the viewpoints of patients and population and to streamline our interventions to achieve UHC.
- Honorable delegates,

- In conclusion, several commitments, important statements, innovative and evidence based ideas are being put forward by member states at this meeting. These should not be evaporated for no apparent reason after the meeting.
- UHC cannot be achieved unless all stakeholders in the country are fully committed, have a sense of ownership, and working collectively with synchronized coordination without neglecting the out-of- pocket payments.
- Myanmar is determined to move forward with increasing momentum to achieve UHC and SDG through the application of innovative, down-to-earth, realistic strategies and interventions.
- Let us transform the challenges on our path to UHC into opportunities.
- The political declaration of this high level meeting is fully endorsed.
- Thank you.