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INTERVENTION BY THE PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION (PAHO)

(Luis Jimenez-McInnis, Director for External Relations, Partnerships and Resource Mobilization)

- Good morning, Mr. Chair,
- Honorable Ambassadors and distinguished delegates of the OAS Member States, JSWG Members,
- Observers and other special guests,

PAHO recognizes the leadership of the Government of the United States and the OAS Secretariat, as well as the commitment of the Member States to implement the mandates of the IX Summit of the Americas, and in particular the Plan of Action on Health and Resilience.

The Political Commitment Document adopted in Los Angeles and the Plan of Action approved in Washington last June are a great opportunity to protect our regional achievements in public health and address the regional health gaps.

These documents are aligned with important regional health priorities that have been adopted by Member States through key resolutions and other PAHO instruments.

Mr. Chair,

I would like to briefly refer to some of the major advances led by PAHO on three issues of particular importance, which were defined by Member States in Los Angeles, as key regional health priorities.

1. *In terms of health systems strengthening*, the pandemic highlighted the need to transform national health systems toward universal health, with a focus on primary care. As of June 2023, and with PAHO's cooperation, 34 Member States are implementing or have decided to initiate strategies to increase the response capacity of the first level of care and 18 states have strengthened integrated health services networks and have promoted improvements in the quality of services.
2. *In the area of regional capacity building for manufacturing of vaccines and other technologies*, PAHO is working closely with strategic allies on the initiative to transfer technology and develop mRNA vaccines in Argentina and Brazil. The Organization has also provided complementary cooperation to strengthen technological infrastructure in the Region, conduct preclinical studies, and analyze intellectual property information in selected centers.

Regional dialogues have also been initiated to facilitate the exchange and dissemination of experiences, and national regulatory systems are being strengthened in accordance with the new policy approved in September 2022.

3. *In terms of public health emergency preparedness*, the organization has supported countries to strengthen surveillance and early outbreak detection systems; in this framework, the Regional Genomic Surveillance Strategy for preparedness and response was adopted in September 2022.

Likewise, all countries in Latin America and the Caribbean are introducing new technologies that allow monitoring and characterization of antimicrobial resistance.

Mr. Chairman,

PAHO reiterates its commitment to this important process, which provides significant support to PAHO' s regional efforts, in collaboration with Member States, to address our common health challenges in the Region of the Americas.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak.