

***Address by***

***Dr Samlee Plianbangchang  
Regional Director, WHO South-East Asia***

***At the***

***Joint Inauguration of RC 65 and 30<sup>th</sup> HMM***

***4 September 2012  
Yogyakarta, Indonesia***

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Excellency; Prof. Boediono, Vice-President of the Government of the Republic of Indonesia, Excellency: Dr Nafsiah Mboi, Minister of Health of the Government of the Republic of Indonesia, Honourable Ministers of Health from Countries of WHO SEAR, Distinguished country representatives, Honorable guests, Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of WHO South-East Asia Region it is my privilege to warmly welcome you all to the joint inauguration of:

- the 30th Meeting of Health Ministers of WHO SEAR; and
- the 65th Session of WHO Regional Committee for SEA.

I sincerely thank the Government of the Republic of Indonesia for hosting these two important meetings. I overwhelmingly thank Excellency, Prof. (Dr) Budiono, Vice President of the Government of the Republic of Indonesia for graciously accepting to inaugurate this joint opening.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Increasing access to health care and curbing catastrophic health expenditure has been a major challenge in SEAR. Through various schemes of health insurance, Indonesia has made an impressive progress in this area during the past few years. Health services coverage in Indonesia has now extended to more than 58 per cent of the population of about 240 million people. What particularly encouraging is that public health work is getting higher priority.

Through the provision of a dedicated budgetary allocation the outreach activities have been expanded to all health centers. This strategy is indeed important because it will help ensure reaching the hard to reach people. And thereby steadily improve health equity in the country.

Excellencies,

Countries of SEAR continue making progress in improving health of their populations. As far as the infectious disease is concerned there have been no new cases of wild polio virus infection since January 2011 and high quality surveillance of acute flaccid paralysis is maintained throughout the Region this is to ensure that we can formally declare polio-free in early 2014.

Measles vaccination coverage in some countries is increasing to reach the elimination target of 95% coverage. Routine immunization has been successfully intensified as declared by Honorable Health Ministers in 2011 and the desired coverage of 90% or more is sustained in most countries.

As far as maternal mortality is concerned between 1990 and 2010 the number of women dying from complication of pregnancy and child birth had decreased by 66%. However, this is not yet sufficient for all countries in the Region to meet the 75% mortality reduction target of MDG5 by 2015. Nonetheless, many countries are on track in their progress towards reaching this goal.

During the recent past, countries had accorded high priority to prevention and control of NCD especially in view of increasing longevity of life of people due to several factors. At the same time, efforts should be enhanced to ensure that our ageing populations remain healthy and they continue to lead a socially and economically productive and satisfied life. Towards this end, life course approach in our health development endeavours needs to be adopted.

Excellencies,

Universal Health Coverage needs balanced development between preventive and curative care. It needs health systems based on primary health care approach and UHC cannot be achieved by health sector alone efforts of other sectors need to be mobilized in a more efficient manner through partnerships.

Furthermore, climate change will further exacerbate the disease burden in all countries. Our public health programmes need vigorous strengthening for effective mitigation of the health impact of CC. And with the current environmental conditions, we may expect more public health emergencies of international concerns and we need to move fast to strengthen country capacity in implementing the International Health Regulations (2005).

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Under the leadership of Director General, Dr Margaret Chan our top priority in SEAR is the implementation of collective decisions of Member States in the WHO Reform agenda. The Member States will have opportunity to review the issues involved during this course of their meetings.

Finally, ladies and gentlemen, I wish the Honorable Health Ministers and distinguished representatives fruitful deliberations. I sincerely thank the local organizing committee for the excellent arrangements made for the two meetings. I also wish you all an enjoyable stay in this historic city of Yogyakarta. Thank you.