



Address by

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to the

**CONSULTATIVE MEETING ON COMPREHENSIVE ANTIMICROBIAL
RESISTANCE SURVEILLANCE PROMOTION IN THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF
IRAN**

Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, 3–4 July 2017

Your Excellency, Dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to be with you today in this important meeting on the promotion of comprehensive antimicrobial resistance surveillance. I would like to express my appreciation to His Excellency Dr Seyyed Hassan Ghazizadeh Hashemi, Minister of Health and Medical Education, for his personal invitation and his leadership to advance the health status of the people of the Islamic Republic of Iran. I would also like to thank our colleagues in the Ministry of Health and Medical Education for their interest and hard work on responding to the global threat of antimicrobial resistance.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Antimicrobial resistance is now very well recognized as one of the greatest public health threats ever, one that not only puts the life of the people at risk but also threatens the achievement of developmental goals. Antimicrobial resistance is the unfortunate result of several factors. Irresponsible use of antibiotics, in the human health sector, in the animal health and in agricultural sectors is the leading cause. Its roots are in the lack of knowledge and understanding of antimicrobial resistance, the absence of strong policies to regulate the use of antibiotics, the lack of adequate national infection prevention and control programmes in health care facilities, and last but not the least, weak laboratory services to closely monitor resistance trends.

The multisectoral and multidisciplinary nature of antimicrobial resistance demands a comprehensive approach to address all of these the drivers. The response starts with establishing a governance structure, with a multisectoral national coordination group composed of high-level decision makers from human health, food and agriculture, animal health, environment, education and finance based on the country's context, in order to oversee the development and implementation of the national action plan on antimicrobial resistance,

with the appropriate technical working groups and secretariat to monitor the implementation of this plan.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Islamic Republic of Iran has a strong health system that provides its people with access to all levels of health care through its network of universities of medical sciences and health services all over the country. I wish to congratulate the Islamic Republic of Iran for its achievements in health and initiation of a national response to antimicrobial resistance. It is among the pioneer group of countries in the Region that have enrolled in the global AMR surveillance system and we hope to see that the country will soon contribute to the global surveillance platform. It has also developed a national action plan that ensures all relevant sectors are engaged, and that will guide the implementation of sound and effective strategies to curb the threat of antimicrobial resistance across the country.

WHO's regional antimicrobial resistance programme is leading several activities to facilitate advancement of the response at the country level, in collaboration with many renowned institutions and experts. We will also be developing regional strategies for infection prevention and control, as well as communication and advocacy to increase awareness about antimicrobial resistance in various sectors and the community, and to influence behavioural change. The close collaboration between my Regional Office and the regional offices of animal health organizations such as the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is an excellent model of the "One Health" approach to the problem.

Your Excellency,

I wish to congratulate you on the launch of the national antimicrobial resistance action plan, which I am sure will achieve all of its targets under your leadership. WHO stands ready to provide all the support needed for a robust response to antimicrobial resistance in the Islamic Republic of Iran.