

USP Statement to the WHO South-East Asia regional office, Regional Committee Seventy-Third Session Agenda Item 9.3 Access to medicines (SEA/RC70(3))

Thank you for providing us with an opportunity to share our comments at the 73rd regional committee session of the WHO SEARO.

USP is a 200-year-old nonprofit organization that sets standards for the identity, strength, quality and purity of medicines, food ingredients and dietary supplements worldwide. Through our standards, advocacy, and education, we help increase the availability of quality medicines, supplements, and food for billions of people globally. We commend WHO for prioritizing the issue of access to affordable medicines and extend our support to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC) by 2030.

Medicines and medical products that reach patients should have their safety, identity, strength, quality, and purity assured. Quality standards for medicines and medical products exist, but adherence to them has not been uniform due to contextual, social, economic and political conditions. The demand for quality affordable medicines can facilitate the introduction of substandard and falsified products into the supply chain. This challenge can be addressed with policies, regulations and robust public quality standards which are generated by pharmacopeias. Pharmacopeial documentary and reference standards are based on science and established through rigorous stakeholder engagement.

We especially congratulate the member countries and the regional office of South East Asia for the [Delhi Declaration for improving access to essential medical products in the south-east Asia region and beyond](#) and support the declaration's call for the Member States to:

1. Leverage the strengths of the region and its role as a major manufacturer of essential medical products, especially generic medicines, to improve accessibility and affordability within SEAR member states and beyond.
2. Continue the momentum to strengthen regulatory cooperation and collaboration to improve the availability, quality, and safety of essential medical products through the SEARN.
3. Promote the development of an essential medical product list, and in particular, an essential diagnostics list, for all levels of healthcare facilities, towards achieving UHC for improved patient care, affordability of quality tests, regulation, and greater capacity to diagnose diseases during outbreaks and strengthened capabilities of national laboratories.
4. Promote appropriate use of medical products, and especially antimicrobials in the community and in healthcare facilities, through

integrated measures, including, but not limited to, education and training of the healthcare professionals to reduce irrational use and antimicrobial resistance.

5. Promote innovation and investment in R&D, including for neglected diseases; encourage the use of practically oriented health research; develop a network of clinical sites and testing facilities for affordable medical products.

We remain committed in our support of the ongoing leadership of WHO in this matter. Through generating evidence, capability building, standards and advocacy, USP is committed to supporting member states globally in their efforts to ensure access to quality medicines and patient safety. Thank you.

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