



**OPENING REMARKS BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER FOR
HEALTH GHANA AT THE 78TH UNGA GLOBAL HEALTH
INITIATIVES SIDE EVENT**

**‘DESCRIBE HOW GLOBAL HEALTH FINANCING MUST MEET
THE DEMANDS AND NEEDS OF NATIONAL INTEREST’
NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 19, 2023**

Excellencies

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am deeply honoured by the opportunity to address you today. Ambassador Akahori has eloquently highlighted the urgent need for collective action to shape a global health financing ecosystem that can effectively pave the way for Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in 2030.

Our world is more interconnected than ever before, and the significance of global health financing cannot be overstated. It plays a pivotal role in shaping the health outcomes and well-being of populations around the globe. However, these financing mechanisms must be tailored to each nation’s unique requirements and priorities to be truly effective and equitable.

The “national interest” concept encompasses various factors, including a country’s health status, socio-economic conditions, cultural settings, and political landscape. Therefore, global health financing should not be a one-size-fits-all endeavour; rather, it must be adaptable and responsive to each nation’s diverse contexts and needs.

This afternoon, I wish to expound upon several fundamental principles that should guide the intersection of global health financing and national interests. These principles underline the importance of

delivering financial support and empowering nations to chart their paths towards equitable health outcomes.

First of all, country ownership is a fundamental concept that recognizes the sovereignty of nations in determining their healthcare priorities and strategies. It acknowledges that countries have unique insights into their healthcare challenges, cultural norms, societal nuances, and political landscapes. As such, they should play a central and authoritative role in shaping the direction and allocation of health financing from the global community, resulting in more effective and sustainable healthcare systems worldwide.

Global health financing efforts must also align with a country's healthcare strategies and priorities. It ensures that resources are directed where needed, considering a country's unique health landscape. It recognizes that the most effective health interventions are tailored to resonate with a country's specific context, needs, and challenges. This alignment enhances health interventions' efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability, fosters ownership and collaboration, and allows adaptation to changing conditions. Ultimately, it contributes to the overarching goal of improving health outcomes and well-being nationally and globally.

Furthermore, providing only financial resources to nations for their healthcare systems is wholly insufficient. In order to address the needs of their populations, governments must have access to sufficient funding. However, as a holistic approach, capacity building must be considered to equip countries with the knowledge, tools, infrastructure, and skills needed to manage and enhance their healthcare systems independently. This approach promotes self-sufficiency, long-term sustainability, and better healthcare outcomes for nations.

We must also recognize the ever-changing nature of health challenges and the need for flexible funding mechanisms. Flexibility in global health financing is about acknowledging that health challenges are fluid and unpredictable. It ensures financing mechanisms can quickly adapt to changing circumstances, including emergencies and unforeseen crises. This adaptability enhances the effectiveness of health

interventions and contributes to more robust and responsive healthcare systems.

Again, the complexity of health issues demands a collaborative approach, and the importance of involving a diverse range of stakeholders in decision-making processes cannot be ignored. Multi-stakeholder engagement recognizes that no single entity can effectively address the intricate challenges of public health. It involves governments, civil society, the private sector, and international partners in decision-making to leverage their diverse perspectives, expertise, and resources. This inclusive approach enhances the comprehensiveness and effectiveness of health interventions, leading to more equitable and sustainable outcomes.

Transparency and accountability in global health financing ensure that resources are used efficiently, ethically, and effectively. They involve open reporting and oversight mechanisms that allow stakeholders to track the flow of funds and ensure funds are used for the intended purposes. Additionally, to promote stakeholders' understanding, it is crucial to have open and inclusive budgeting and planning processes in the healthcare sector. These principles enhance the impact of healthcare initiatives, foster public trust, and prevent fraud and corruption in healthcare systems.

Amid the plethora of global health financing initiatives, the need for harmonization and coordination becomes more evident. These principles unite diverse stakeholders, fostering synergy and ensuring that resources are efficiently allocated while minimizing fragmentation and duplication of efforts. By streamlining efforts and promoting collaboration among stakeholders, these principles help maximize the impact of healthcare initiatives, strengthen health systems, and contribute to more effective and efficient global health financing.

Country-led monitoring and evaluation are also necessary to assess the impact of global health financing, as with any other health program. The country-led monitoring approach empowers nations to take a proactive role in evaluating the impact of health programs. It leverages their local knowledge and ownership, promotes accountability, and enables evidence-based decision-making. It also ensures that the

perspectives and needs of the population being served are taken into account. This approach is a key driver of continuous improvement in healthcare interventions and fosters transparency and collaboration in the global health community.

Ladies and gentlemen, achieving UHC by ensuring that no one is left behind, is a profound influence of cultural and social factors on health outcomes. Therefore, community engagement cannot be left out of the global health financing conversation. Involving communities in decision-making ensures that health financing initiatives are responsive to the unique needs of diverse communities. This approach leads to more culturally sensitive, effective, and community-centred healthcare interventions, ultimately improving health outcomes.

Finally, when discussing global health financing and the pursuit of Universal Health Coverage (UHC), the critical aspect of sustainability comes to the forefront. All countries must ensure that investments in their healthcare systems do not create dependency but strengthen their capacity to finance healthcare in the long term independently. The principle of sustainability underscores the importance of achieving financial self-sufficiency, fostering resilience, and empowering countries to maintain and enhance their healthcare services autonomously. This principle entails a forward-looking perspective, emphasizing domestic resource mobilization and strategic health infrastructure and governance investments. By advancing self-sufficiency and fortifying resilience, it paves the way for sustained enhancements in healthcare services within our nations. Ultimately, this approach aligns with our goal of achieving UHC by 2030 and ensures that the progress made endures, benefiting our societies for generations to come.

In conclusion, today's discussion underscores the imperative of a flexible, responsive, and collaborative approach to global health financing—one that respects and amplifies the diverse demands and needs of each nation's health system. By aligning our efforts, we can collectively advance the cause of health equity and work toward a

healthier world of people. Thank you for your attention, and I look forward to our enlightening deliberations.