Honourable chair,
Distinguished delegates,

For years, technology has been a driver of change across the world. In 2015, there were more than 7 billion mobile telephone subscriptions worldwide - mostly in low- and middle-income countries. Mobile coverage now frequently extends further than electricity, clean water, and even the most basic of face-to-face health services. On the other hand, 400 million people remain without access to essential health services, and almost half of the world’s population lack basic social protections. To achieve SDG 3.8 - universal health coverage - new tools such as mHealth need to be embraced.

The potential uses of mHealth are many: remote consultations and diagnostic services; widespread dissemination of key public health messages; improvements in the management of complex chronic diseases; dramatic improvements in medical education and training. The list goes on.

Regarding the practical elements of the implementation of digital health, we welcome the draft Resolution proposed by a number of Member States at this Assembly on digital health. WHO has a key role to play in creating and implementing international standards in data, interoperability of digital technologies, implementation packages to assist countries in the transition to digital healthcare, and ensuring progress is equitable and leaves no one behind. We urge the Director-General to take action on this, and for Member States to play their part in digitising global health systems for a healthier future.

As the future of the health workforce, we urge WHO and member states to strongly consider the importance of mHealth to our collective future. Technology must be integrated into medical education and training structures. Funding must be invested in remote health services. Public health interventions must be designed with a digital platform in mind - and supporting infrastructure must be put in place. eHealth platforms must be integrated into health services where possible.

We, the younger generation and the future health workforce, are committed to invest our minds, efforts and time to advance technology in healthcare. We are on the precipice of a digital health revolution. It is time we embrace it.

Thank you.