**Zimbabwe Position Paper – Rachel Salem-Wiseman**

**Committee:** World Health Organization

The delegation of Zimbabwe is located in Southern Africa and has a population just above 14 million people. Zimbabwe contains less than 200 hospitals and only 40% of the Zimbabwean people have access to sanitation facilities. The province of Ontario has a smaller population than Zimbabwe and more than double the amount of hospitals. The nation of Zimbabwe has had a difficult past due to the colonization of Africa between 1870 and 1900. Due to the adversity that Zimbabwe has faced, they have not been able to thrive as other nations have and as a consequence the delegation of Zimbabwe lacks access to potable water, sanitation facilities, trained physicians, and medicine. The delegation of Zimbabwe implores all developed nations to help Zimbabwe improve their conditions by starting funds to build more hospitals, train more physicians, transport needed medicines and ameliorate the access to potable water and sanitation facilities. The delegation of Zimbabwe wishes to discuss the topic of non-communicable diseases first as they are a leading cause of death in Zimbabwe. Those between the ages of 30 and 70 in Zimbabwe have a 19% chance of dying from a NCD and prostate cancer happens to be the third most prominent cause of death in Zimbabwe.

A non-communicable disease is a disease that is not transmitted from person to person. The four main varieties of NCDs are: cardiovascular, cancers, chronic respiratory diseases and diabetes. In Zimbabwe the number of deaths caused each year by non-communicable diseases is increasing. Due to the lack of sanitation facilities, potable water and other basic needs, the Zimbabwean people are at a higher risk of obtaining a NCD. Seven of the top ten causes of death in Zimbabwe are NCDs which is worrisome and the delegation of Zimbabwe thoroughly wishes to improve this. Cancer, primarily of the cervical and prostate variety, is the most common and problematic NCD in Zimbabwe. Cervical and prostate cancer are both curable, if identified and treated early on, yet Zimbabwe lacks many of the treatments needed to cure these cancers and fewer options are available. Cancer treatments such as radiation and chemotherapy are expensive and supplies are limited. Moreover, there are approximately only ten certified oncologists who are currently practising in Zimbabwe. These problems are further intensified by lack of food, lack of water, stress, and lack of hospitals in close proximities. The delegation of Zimbabwe believes that in order to fight the quandary of NCDs a program must be set in place to first providing sanitation facilities and potable water, then providing education to citizens on NCDs and their symptoms, next beginning to build further hospitals, and finally supplying needed treatments for NCDs. If a plan such as this is implemented Zimbabwe will finally be able to begin to thrive and develop.

In Zimbabwe the prices of pharmaceuticals have risen over 1,376% since January 2005. The prices of pharmaceuticals are relatively higher than international prices which is problematic for the delegation of Zimbabwe, as there is great need for them, due to the widespread occurrences of HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis. The funding gap for pharmaceuticals is much too large to be fulfilled, therefore many Zimbabwean citizens are unable to obtain the treatments they need. It is essential for Zimbabwean citizens to have easy access to pharmaceuticals because without these medicines those who are infected with AIDS, Malaria, Tuberculosis, or other illnesses will be left to die. Due to the crash of the Zimbabwean dollar and the suboptimal state of the Zimbabwean economy, the prices of pharmaceuticals are still rising and supplies are limited. The delegation of Zimbabwe believes that if the UN were able to agree upon a set price for pharmaceuticals every country’s prices would be equal. If this plan was to be implemented then the people of Zimbabwe would be able to afford the drugs they need. The delegation of Zimbabwe believes that if the prices are not dropped Zimbabwe will continue to suffer and the Zimbabwean people will continue to succumb to illnesses like AIDS and Malaria. AIDS is the number one cause of death in Zimbabwe and has been one of the top five causes of death for the past ten years. If pharmaceuticals were more attainable for Zimbabwean citizens then the number of deaths caused by AIDS each year would drop. Therefore the delegation of Zimbabwe wishes to have one set price for pharmaceuticals as opposed to the inequality of prices that developing nations now face.

The delegation of Zimbabwe believes that due to the gender inequalities concerning medical care, action must be taken in order to secure fair health care for both genders. Zimbabwe is primarily concerned with the heightened male suicide rate and the maternal mortality rate. Firstly, concerning the male suicide rates, the delegation of Zimbabwe believes that the best course of action to take would be to offer more psychiatric help and to educate Zimbabweans on ways to improve mental health. An anonymous suicide help station would also benefit Zimbabwean citizens, for those who choose to receive help would still be able keep their identity a secret. The delegation of Zimbabwe recognizes the social pressures that are put on men and hopes that by implementing a way for them to receive help anonymously, they will feel comfortable seeking this help. Due to the poor conditions in Zimbabwe many citizens are suffering from depression and feel the need to take their own life. Suicide is the eleventh cause of death in Zimbabwe and 1.79% of all deaths in Zimbabwe are due to suicide. Moreover, the suicide numbers of men double the numbers of suicides committed by women. On the topic of maternal mortality, the nation of Zimbabwe believes that in order to reduce the number of maternal deaths better training is required for physicians, midwives should be present during birth and hospital conditions must be improved. Maternal complications is the fifteenth top cause of death in Zimbabwe due to the less than satisfactory hospital conditions in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe wishes to fix the problems of male suicide and maternal mortality, yet is in need of financial support from developed countries. Aiding Zimbabwe would benefit other countries because if the conditions in Zimbabwe are improved then there will be less people attempting to flee Zimbabwe and other African countries. Therefore reducing the amount of refugees fleeing to developing countries. A happy and healthy Africa is in your best interests, for once Africa has been properly developed and has begun to thrive, Zimbabwe and other African countries will be your allies.