

MENTAL HEALTH GAP ACTION PROGRAMME (mhGAP)

4th Meeting of the mhGAP Forum - 10 October 2012

STATEMENTS OF THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES
OF
THE MEMBER STATES

BRAZIL

ETHIOPIA (Minister-Counsellor)

FINLAND

INDIA

NORWAY

QATAR

SWITZERLAND

UNITED KINGDOM

USA

Talking points for PR, India on mhGAP Forum, 10th October 2012 at WHO

9000 to 1030am; Executive Board Room

India had the privilege and pleasure of sponsoring, along with Switzerland and USA, the resolution on mental health in the Executive Board of WHO in January 2012. This resolution, endorsed by the World Health Assembly in May 2012 has led to the development of the global Mental Health Action Plan. We are indeed very pleased to see a very rapid progress on this action plan and the support that many member states have provided to this initiative.

Mental health is an integral part of health but often remains neglected. India faces a number of health challenges such as tuberculosis, malaria, child health, HIV; these are all important. But for us, the evolving threat of mental disorders is also important. Action on mental health can not wait till other problems have been solved. It will then be too late.

It is clearly recognized that severe mental disorders affect nearly 20 per 1000 population in the country. This is a population that needs continuous treatment and regular follow-up. There are close to ten million severely mentally ill in our country without adequate and effective treatment.

It is also known that nearly 5% of the adult population suffers from depression. Majority of these people remain undiagnosed and untreated. Depression being the theme for this year's World Mental Health Day, it is important to recall that depression is also the cause of a large number of suicides.

To address this huge burden, National Mental Health Programme was started in 1982. Within this programme, community based mental health care at the level of district was evolved and implemented. Currently, the District Mental Health Programme is being revised for implementation within the 12th Five Year Plan with a substantial increase in financial allocation. India is also revising its mental health policy.

India very much welcomes WHO keeping mental health among its high priorities. We believe that with WHO's technical assistance based on the action plan, all countries will be better placed to improve the mental health of their citizens.

