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**KEMENTERIAN KESIHATAN MALAYSIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH MALAYSIA**

PRESS STATEMENT

**DENGUE SIDE EVENT
EN MARGE THE 69TH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY,
GENEVA SWITZERLAND**

On the side of the 69th session of the World Health Assembly ,I chaired the inaugural side event on dengue on 23rd of May 2016 in Palais Des Nations, the headquarters of the United Nations. This side event garnered worldwide support, from our affected neighbors like Singapore, the Philippine and Thailand, to the more distant countries like Japan, China, Mexico and even Brazil.

While in 1970s, only nine countries had experienced epidemic dengue hemorrhagic fever, the disease now is endemic in more than 100 countries in the African, Americas, Eastern Mediterranean, South-east Asian and the Western Pacific regions.

Malaysia's concern is underlined by the fact that the international investment on dengue management does not tally with its global burden of disease, in comparison to a more news-catching illness such as Zika and Ebola. It is vital to ensure a high-level of political commitment so that adequate human and financial resources are made available for the development of an evidence-based national strategy and plan for dengue prevention and outbreak response.

Adorning the side event was Dr Margaret Chan, Director General of WHO, who arrived to show her personal support on the agenda of dengue, reminding the session that investment in tackling the common vector of *Aedes Aegypti* will prove to generate a high return of investment in the form of tackling not only dengue, but rather a group of vector-borne disease which includes Zika and Chikunguya. Where vector control has achieved a remarkable result previously, a premature withdrawal of commitment from authorities lead to a new outbreak

An impressive line up of high-level panelists from Japan, Brazil, Singapore , The Philippines and WHO then held a 90 minute wide-range discussion on the topics of new tools for vector management, and how dengue should be positioned strategically within the conversation of Sustainable Development Goals.

With Malaysia being congratulated for championing the dengue agenda, it is expected that the side event will generate widespread global interest leading to a re-introduction of dengue dialogue in the global health fora.

YB DATUK SERI DR. S. SUBRAMANIAM
24th May 2016