**Statement Delivered by Hon. Upendra Yadav, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Health and Population of the Government of Nepal at the Panel Discussion on Nursing and Universal Health Care of the World Innovation Summit for Health (Doha, 14 November 2018)**

**Mr. Chair,**

**Excellencies,**

**Honorable ministers**

**Distinguished Guests and delegates,**

**Ladies and Gentleman.**

This is my warm greetings from federal democratic republic of Nepal. It is indeed my distinct honour and great pleasure to attend this "World Innovations Summit for Health" being held in historical and beautiful city, Doha.

I would, at the outset, like to express our sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Government of the State of Qatar for successfully hosting the Summit of innovative nature. In this context, I applaud the exemplary, dynamic leadership and role of Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Naseer, Chairperson of Qatar foundation for elevating the WISH to be in such a high status.

I also thank the Government of the State of Qatar and Her Excellency Dr. Hanan Mohamed Al-Kuwari, Minister of Public Health,  in particular for inviting me to the Summit and providing warm hospitality to me and my delegation ever since my arrival in Doha.

**Mr. Chair,**

It is undoubted that Universal Health Coverage (UHC) resembles with the aim of having access to the health services for all that includes preventive, promotive, curative, rehabilitative and palliative care without the risk of financial hardship of the people. In order to achieve the goal of UHC, a holistic approach, multi-sectoral cooperation and collaboration is a must for the low-income or least developed countries (LDCs).

The Government of Nepal has always been keen to insure Universal Health Coverage and I believe that the practice, we follow in Nepal in this regard could also be helpful for other countries as well. The Constitution of Nepal has ensured the Right to Health to provide free basic health services for all. We have established a dedicated fund called as Bipanna Fund i.e. fund for especially targeted to the poor and deprived citizens. In this context, we have reserved 10% of total beds in private health institutions also for the economically incapable patients. The Government of Nepal has taken necessary measures for general health security, employee health security system and maternity schemes, including health insurances. Basic health services for all people from grass-roots to tertiary levels to achieve the objectives of UHC.

I believe that one of the major aspects of UHC is human resources also. Our focus should not be oriented to health financing only but it should also cover all components of health system that include health services delivery, health technologies, health facilities, information systems, governance, and quality assurance mechanisms. Regarding human resources for UHC, we have targeted extending human resources to population ratio. As my portfolio in the Ministry of Health and Population, I have focused on availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality of human resources. Keeping in view of the needs of human resources, production, deployment, and recruitment of essential human resources have been clearly planned and executed.

**Mr. Chair,**

With regard to the Nursing sector, we have annual production capacity of around 10 thousand nurses per year with various specializations, including pediatric, medical/surgical, psychiatric, community health, women health and development, critical care, oncology and midwifery. We have set standards for minimum requirement of nurses in different categories of hospitals and boosted up nursing activities through various policies and programmes. We have around 20 thousand nurses of various cadres in public sector and around 30 thousand nurses in private sector. Nurses and midwives provide five-fold services from health-posts to super-specialty hospitals. Similarly, the services need to be extended beyond health institutions, including school health, home, industrial area, birthing centers, nurse led clinic, basic health care centers and health promotion centers in order to provide wide range of services for Universal Health Coverage. Even then, there is shortage of nurses and midwives in service sectors and we need to increase investment in nursing and midwifery workforce for utilization and production with specialization.

Nepal has already launched Nursing Now Campaign on 4 October 2018. Nepal won Disaster Risk Reduction Award by United Nations Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction in 2017; this was the first time that was awarded to nurses.

We are in process to develop and implement nursing and midwifery policies for the future needs of the country as well as meeting the international norms and standards for qualitative and competitive human resources. In order to boost up UHC, we have formulated and implemented various policies and programmes.

We are aiming at the proper alignment of policies, needs and supply of human resources as well as infrastructures and technologies. Still now, we have some challenges to face in the way ahead and we are countering them to achieve UHC, primarily by multisectoral cooperation and collaboration through the policies of Public Private Partnership. We are also expecting international cooperation and collaboration to have dedicated continued professional development and research wings with nursing universities for specialization both in-service and pre-service education.

At last but not least, I wish to have a great success of "World Innovation Summit for Health, 2018" in Doha, Qatar with the achievement of targeted mission.

**Thank you for your kind attention.**