

# Secretary for Health continues to attend 78th World Health Assembly in Geneva (with photos)

The Secretary for Health, Professor Lo Chung-mau, continued to attend the 78th World Health Assembly (WHA) of the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva, Switzerland, yesterday (May 20, Geneva time). He also took the chance to meet with other participants and WHO officials to tell the world good stories of Hong Kong and the country.

As members of the Chinese delegation, Professor Lo and the Director of Health, Dr Ronald Lam, continued to attend the plenary session on the second day of the WHA.

In the morning, Professor Lo and Dr Ronald Lam listened to the remarks made by Vice Premier of the State Council Mr Liu Guozhong at the High Level Segment.

Professor Lo said, "Following the presentation of national positions by the Minister of the National Health Commission, Mr Lei Haichao, and the Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other International Organizations in Switzerland, Mr Chen Xu, on Taiwan-related proposal, COVID-19 origins tracing and China's promotion of co-operation and exchange on global health on the first day of the Assembly, Vice Premier of the State Council Mr Liu Guozhong also delivered remarks at the High Level Segment today. As our country has been actively involving in global health cooperation and exchanges, including deploying healthcare rescue teams to many countries and regions over the years, as well as providing over 500 billions of personal protection items and 2.3 billion doses of vaccines during the COVID-19 pandemics, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government spares no efforts to complement the nation's strategies to contribute to the building of a global community of health for all."

Professor Lo and Dr Lam also attended a thematic side event hosted by the National Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine (NATCM) and cohosted by the health authorities of Malaysia, Nepal, Saudi Arabia and Seychelles. The side event, themed "Improving Universal Health Coverage through the implementation of WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy 2025-2034", was moderated by the Dean of the Vanke School of Public Health of Tsinghua University, Professor Margaret Chan, and the Director of the Institute for Global Health of Peking University, Professor Ren Minghui. The Commissioner of the NATCM, Professor Yu Yanhong, also delivered a keynote speech at the side event.

During the panel discussion, Professor Lo shared the implementation experiences in promoting high-quality and high-standard development of

Chinese medicine (CM) in Hong Kong on all fronts. He said, "The HKSAR Government will leverage Hong Kong's strengths in its healthcare system, regulatory framework, standard-setting, clinical research, trade, and more to develop the city into a bridgehead for the internationalisation of CM. In terms of CM practice, the Hospital Authority has accumulated extensive experience through its integrated Chinese-Western medicine (ICWM) services over the years. The Chinese Medicine Hospital of Hong Kong will further develop the 'Hong Kong model' for pure CM, CM-predominant, and ICWM clinical services, with a view to promoting CM service, management standards and system development at the international level. As regards CM drugs, the Government Chinese Medicines Testing Institute is actively advancing the work on scientific research, education and promoting international exchanges on CM drug testing, including developing a series of internationally recognised reference standards and testing methods for CM drugs and their products, and promoting the commercial application of these methods in the sectors through training and technology transfer programmes, with a view to developing Hong Kong into an international hub for CM testing and quality control."

During their visit to Geneva, Professor Lo and Dr Lam also met with the Director of the Department of Nutrition and Food Safety of the WHO, Dr Luz María De Regil, to discuss the strategies and interventions for obesity and weight management. Professor Lo emphasised, "Like many other regions and countries, Hong Kong is facing the challenges posed by the increasing prevalence of obesity. The HKSAR Government has long been attaching great importance to the prevention and control of obesity and will strive to halt the rise of obesity by adopting life-course interventions."

The delegation will depart for Hong Kong today (May 21, Geneva time) and arrive in Hong Kong tomorrow (May 22, Hong Kong time).



