JANE NISHIDA REMARKS

WHO First Global Conference on Air Pollution and Health

Geneva, Switzerland

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- I am Jane Nishida, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator for International and Tribal Affairs at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – EPA. I am pleased to be representing the U.S on behalf of EPA and a number of other agencies, including the Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development.

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- EPA's core mission is protecting human health and the environment, and air quality is essential to that protection.

- EPA has annually reported on our nation's progress in addressing air pollution since the passage of our Clean Air Act in 1970.

- Acting Administrator Wheeler remarked at the recent release of our report on "Our Nation's Air: Status and Trends Through 2017":

  "Through federal and state implementation of the Clean Air Act and technological advances in the private sector, America has achieved one of the great public-private successes of our time – dramatically improving air quality and public health while simultaneously growing the nation's population and economy."

- The Report highlights that between 1970 and 2017 the combined emissions of our six common or "criteria" air pollutants dropped by 73 percent, while the U.S. economy has almost tripled.

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- This includes an 88% reduction in sulfur dioxide; ambient lead reduction of 80%; and fine particulates reduction of 40%.

- Today, Americans breath cleaner air and face lower risks of adverse health effects.

- Even with this progress, some Americans still reside in areas that do not meet our national air quality standards.

- So, at the federal level, we continue to work with our states, local and tribal governments, and our citizens, to further improve air quality across the country.

- However, the important lesson from the U.S. experience is that we can significantly reduce human exposure to air pollution while simultaneously achieving robust economic growth.

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- The United States has long played a leading role in seeking to elevate the priority and attention to air pollution as a major area for international cooperation and action through various important multilateral policy fora.

- The United States was a sponsor of the successful resolution on *"Health and the Environment: Addressing the Impact of Air Pollution"* at the 68th World Health Assembly (WHO) in 2015.

- We also introduced a successful resolution to elevate air pollution as a priority program area for the U.N. Environment Program (UNEP) at the 1st U.N. Environmental Assembly in 2014.

- This year, we raised this issue at the G-7 Environmental Ministers Meeting, advocating for a greater focus on the significant impact and link between air quality and public health.

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- The U.S. has long been active in sharing our legal, policy, and technical approaches, including research cooperation that supports the scientific foundation needed for effective air quality management.

- This has included engaging with countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America to help establish key building blocks for effective air quality management, including air monitoring, emission inventories and control strategies.

- The United States, through the Department of State Embassy Air Quality Monitoring Program, has installed air quality monitors at more than 24 embassies and consulates around the world and by end of this year this number will be near 40.

- Air quality monitoring data from this program is shared in real-time on EPA's AirNow.gov website and in some countries, it is connected to local air quality monitoring networks.

- Through EPA's Megacities partnerships, the United States also supports capacity building efforts to equip policy experts in partner countries in Africa and Latin America countries to be regional leaders in air quality management.

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- A good example of this sort of work has been EPA efforts to share a key tool that we use domestically to help correlate specific actions that reduce air pollution emissions, with their associated public health and economic benefits.

- We refer to this tool as the "Benefits Mapping and Analysis Program"—or BenMAP. EPA has developed an international version of the tool that has been demonstrated in number of collaborating countries and we have certified 10

BenMAP trainers in eight countries. We have now also produced online training to make use of this tool more broadly available and EPA also provided a course on BenMap as part of the training day for this Conference.

- The United States has also been a leading advocate for reducing the harmful emissions from home cooking and heating in developing countries. We are actively engaged with WHO and the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves and encourage others to join the Alliance.

- Our experience with BenMap and cookstoves is proof that the environment and health communities can, and should, join together to tackle environmental health challenges.

- Some of you may be aware of the critical milestone we reached on this issue is September.

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- The United States was pleased to have air pollution recognized as a major cause of deaths from non-communicable diseases – or NCDs-, as part of the 3rd High-Level Meeting on Prevention and Control of NCDs at this year's UN General Assembly.

- Given air pollution's ranking as the second largest risk factor for NCDs, we were pleased that the Political Declaration from the UNGA High Level Meeting on Prevention and Control of NCDs included the following language to:

  "Increase global awareness, action and international cooperation on environmental risk factors, to address the high number of premature deaths from non-communicable diseases attributed to human exposure to indoor and outdoor air pollution, and underscoring the particular importance of cross-sectoral cooperation in addressing these public health risks;"

- The outcome from the High-Level Meeting along with this Conference today, show the growing recognition of the need to address air pollution if we are to meaningfully reduce premature deaths from non-communicable diseases globally.

- Addressing air pollution will require tremendous efforts across traditional disciplinary boundaries, which is why this First WHO Global Conference on Air Pollution and Health is so important.

- We thank the organizers of this conference and look forward to continuing to work with all of you to address air pollution and its health impacts.

[If Needed, Geneva Heath Action Agenda

Ex. 5 Deliberative Process (DP)