



statement

LDCs request for extension of TRIPS implementation

IFPMA firmly supports the efforts of governments and civil society to increase access to medicines in developing countries, particularly in LDCs. Ensuring the availability, accessibility, and affordability of medicines is complex, and must be viewed within the overall context of universal health coverage. The vast majority of essential medicines are not protected by intellectual property (IP) and therefore IP plays no role in limiting access to these medicines. For other medicines, intellectual property may be one of many factors to be taken into account in policies to expand access.

Sound intellectual property rights are powerful tools for accelerating economic development, and LDCs stand to benefit from the implementation of the TRIPS Agreement. Nevertheless, TRIPS implementation can pose practical challenges in LDCs, and certain accommodations may be appropriate.

IFPMA continues to support the 2013 WTO decision to extend TRIPS implementation until 2021. While IFPMA recognizes that LDCs may in due course need certain additional flexibility to implement TRIPS, additional waivers or extensions do not appear to be necessary at this stage, as the current waiver is in force until 2021. IFPMA looks forward to the next TRIPS Council, which should provide WTO Members the opportunity to better understand why it is felt that an additional waiver relating to medicines is required given the existing extension.