



# statement

## A shared commitment to improving global health

*31 October 2012 - Dr John Lechleiter, Chairman, President and CEO, Eli Lilly and Company; Mr Masafumi Nogimori, Chairman of the Board, Astellas Pharma Inc.; Dr. Stefan Oschmann, Merck Executive Board Member and Chief Executive Officer of Merck Serono statement written to coincide with the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA) biennial health conference under the theme "Innovating Together for Global Health".*

Over the past century, medical innovation has transformed the human experience by curing disease, diminishing suffering, and extending life spans worldwide. We have vanquished scourges like polio, vaccinated to prevent measles, mumps, rubella and other ailments, increased cancer survival rates, and turned HIV/AIDS from a death sentence into a manageable condition. Efforts to improve global health are having a tangible impact on future generations. For example, immunizations provided to nearly 300 million children in 72 developing countries have saved over five million lives.

Yet, some of our greatest challenges lie ahead. We're seeing the rise of superbugs resistant to current antibiotics. Neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) continue to hobble emerging economies. And cancer, diabetes, respiratory and neurological disorders, cardiovascular disease, and other non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are a growing burden on rich and poor countries alike. NCDs now account for 60 percent of all premature deaths around the world and it's estimated that by 2030, over 80 percent of premature deaths will be in low- and middle-income countries.

Making inroads against these problems requires an unprecedented degree of global cooperation. It also demands that we expand our arsenal of medical treatments and cures through ongoing innovation.

That is why at the end of October, the research-based pharmaceutical industry will convene an international meeting with experts, policy-makers, innovators and thought leaders from the public and private sectors to strengthen the response to our most pressing global health challenges. We will focus on medical innovation and how to address global health challenges, including diseases that disproportionately affect the poorer regions of the world.

Solving these global health problems starts with a shared commitment to improving lives. The expertise and contributions of the global health community – nurses, doctors, governments, foundations, NGOs, academic institutions, and industry – have dramatically increased access to quality care and medicines, reaching the farthest corners of the world with life-saving treatment and care.

Even with these efforts, fighting disease in developing countries continues to pose enormous challenges. Even when effective treatments exist, infrastructure to deliver and administer them is often lacking.

Malaria is a prime example. Over the past decade, public-private partnerships have revolutionized both therapies for this disease and ways to provide access to them. Yet, thousands of young children in sub-Saharan Africa continue to die from malaria each day, because they cannot obtain the treatment they need in time.

For many other diseases, we desperately need treatment breakthroughs. The good news is that industry scientists are currently developing more than 3,000 compounds to treat a range of debilitating diseases, with 1,500 targeting the growing burden of NCDs. These efforts are focused on providing patients with treatments that are more effective and convenient to use – all with the goal of improving chances of healthier lives.



# *statement*

Advances in science and technology are providing drug hunters with new tools and approaches for this important work. These have led to development of biotherapeutics, 'personalized' medicines, and breakthrough vaccines to prevent diseases in the first place.

None of this is possible though without policies such as intellectual property (IP) protection, which is the lifeblood of any enterprise generating value from ideas. On average, it takes nearly 14 years and one billion Euros to bring a new medicine from the drawing board to the pharmacy. Without the ability to protect one's intellectual property, medical innovation would not be sustainable. And the benefits of IP protection include not only breakthrough medicines, but, over time, a broad range of low-priced generic medicines, which are critical to fighting disease in low- and middle-income countries.

Another key step would be to standardize best practices from national regulatory systems so that medicines can get to patients who need them more quickly and less expensively.

Addressing global health challenges is among our most urgent human and societal needs. Working together, we've begun to make progress. Our industry will continue to innovate and work with the health community to find new and effective approaches that make life better for millions of people. And we'll continue to work to help the public and policy-makers understand that innovation is not the problem. It is the solution.

## **About the IFPMA:**

IFPMA represents the research-based pharmaceutical companies and associations across the globe. The research-based pharmaceutical industry's 1.3 million employees research, develop and provide medicines and vaccines that improve the life of patients worldwide. Based in Geneva, IFPMA has official relations with the United Nations and contributes industry expertise to help the global health community find solutions that improve global health.

## **For further information, please contact:**

Peter Shelby, IFPMA  
Tel +41/22 338 3223  
Mob +41/79 820 2599  
[p.shelby@ifpma.org](mailto:p.shelby@ifpma.org)