



news release

IFPMA contribution to key global health discussions @WHA70 (22-31 May)

Geneva, 31 May 2017 – Starting with the election of Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus as Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), deliberations during the 70th World Health Assembly (WHA70) in Geneva this week touched upon key public health and global security issues such as cancer prevention and control, antimicrobial resistance, pandemic influenza preparedness, falsified medicines, and sustainable supply chains to ensure the availability of medicines and vaccines.

Attending WHA70 for the first time in his capacity as Director General of IFPMA, Thomas Cueni said: “This Assembly will undoubtedly be remembered for many reasons, not least because of the election of a new head at the WHO. We look forward to working with Dr Tedros and discussing our vision that a solution-focused approach is needed to deliver on our shared objective to improve health outcomes across the globe. WHO leadership and coordination is ever more crucial to ensure continued effective prioritization and response in an increasingly complex health landscape”. Cueni recognized that the cost of medicines was an area of concern for the global health community. He added: “We need to factor into the equation that decisions on innovation we make today will play a key role in ensuring health solutions for tomorrow’s patients. IFPMA and its research-based biopharma industry members are eager to deepen existing collaborations and explore new holistic and creative approaches to improve the availability, accessibility, and affordability of innovative medicines and vaccines, as well as high-quality generics that stem from such innovation”.

As an organization in official relations with the United Nations, IFPMA contributes industry expertise to help find solutions that improve global health. At WHA70, many discussions were of particular relevance to the biopharma industry. The following are IFPMA statements delivered this week:

- **[Election of Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus:](#)** IFPMA congratulates Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus on his election as Director-General of the WHO. This appointment is a reflection of his wide-ranging experience in health policy and practice and his qualities of leadership. IFPMA acknowledges the need for “healthy” exchanges with WHO, and trusts the Dr Tedros will share IFPMA’s vision that a solution-focused approach is needed to deliver on a shared objective for improved health outcomes. The private sector has a key role to play in helping achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals, namely in contributing to achieving the global health goals.
- **[Antimicrobial resistance:](#)** IFPMA commends the WHO on the implementation of its AMR Global Action Plan and the 67 Member States that have now completed their national action plans. IFPMA welcomes WHO’s efforts to strengthen a more systematic approach towards stewardship. Improving the appropriate use of antibiotics is a complex process. IFPMA recommends a case-by-case approach taking into account local antibiotic resistance patterns and tailored towards national health system capabilities. Addressing AMR requires comprehensive efforts to improve sanitation, hygiene, vaccination rates, infection control, education, and stewardship. IFPMA announced at the WHA, the launch of the [AMR Industry Alliance](#).
- **[Substandard/spurious/falsely-labelled/falsified/counterfeit medical products \(SSFFC\):](#)** IFPMA commends the fifth recommendation of the Mechanism Review report which encourages the engagement of additional actors, including manufacturers. IFPMA supports efforts to tackle falsified medicines, in particular as a member of [Fight the Fakes](#), a campaign of over 30 leading public health organizations that work together to speak up against falsified medicines. IFPMA welcomes the consensus found by WHO Mechanism members in accepting the use of the term “falsified”. This consensus is also in line with IFPMA’s position as stated in its [Ten Principles](#).
- **[Review of the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness \(PIP\) Framework:](#)** IFPMA welcomes the progress made since the establishment of the Framework and remain committed partners in this initiative. It welcomes the upcoming external audit to measure progress and impact on actual improved preparedness, while supporting the system’s transparency and providing added incentives to contribute to the PIP Framework. IFPMA welcomes the consultations of the WHO Secretariat with the CBD/ Convention on



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Biological Diversity secretariat on the public health implications of the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol.

- **Dementia:** IFPMA commends the WHO Secretariat for its vision and resolute leadership in addressing dementia. It applauds the WHO for taking such an important step towards developing a global action plan which calls for all stakeholders, including the private sector, to tackle the dementia crisis. IFPMA supports the seven action areas in the plan, especially the need to advance research and innovation as a key contribution to help fight dementia. Drug development for dementia is highly challenging due to lower success rates, longer development times, and difficulties in recruitment of trial participants. The federation supports WHO's push for a significant upscaling of research investment to accelerate the development of new therapies and diagnostics for dementia.
- **Shortages:** IFPMA welcomes WHO's efforts in developing a framework to avert shortages. It calls for timely dialogue between manufacturers and public health authorities to address challenges to prevent shortages, anticipate the evolution of national health programs, ensure more accurate demand forecasting, and reduce and harmonize regulatory approval times for post-approval changes and in-country testing for lot release. IFPMA regrets that much of this important discussion has focused on the UN High Level Panel on Access to Medicines. Improving access to medicines across the world is one of the greatest challenges of our time, yet, as referenced by a number of Member States, the Panel's mandate was too narrow and based on a false premise.
- **Cancer:** IFPMA welcomes the resolution and its integrated approach to cancer prevention and control. It was pleased to note that the resolution recognizes "intellectual property rights are an important incentive in the development of new health products". IFPMA supports the resolution's call to action to build health systems that ensure patients across the globe are diagnosed early enough to benefit from a full set of treatment options including surgery, radiation, and medicines – both generic and new. The federation recognizes that the fight against cancer requires long-term, holistic efforts with a sense of urgency. IFPMA acknowledges that the cost of cancer care, including new treatments, is an area of concern for many member states and the global public health community. IFPMA members are working directly with Member States and payers to address affordability concerns "taking into account their context, institutional and legal frameworks as well as national priorities".

Seizing the opportunity of the global health stakeholders being present in Geneva, IFPMA hosted a series of events in the fringes of the WHA: Delivering the [benefits of biotherapeutics](#) (co-hosted with the International Alliance of Patients Organizations), [a reception on life-course immunization and prevention](#), and provided support to [Access Accelerated](#) and partners UICC, World Bank, in the organization of [an event on the role of partnerships in achieving the SDGs](#). IFPMA also took active part in a series of [external side events](#). Videos are available here: [IFPMA event on immunization and prevention](#); [Access Accelerated event on partnerships](#).

About IFPMA

IFPMA represents research-based biopharmaceutical companies and associations across the globe. The research-based biopharmaceutical industry's 2 million employees discover, develop, and deliver 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. IFPMA advocates policies and practices that encourage the discovery of and access to life-saving and life-enhancing medicines and vaccines, for people everywhere.

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