



International
Federation of
Pharmaceutical
Manufacturers &
Associations

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l'Industrie du
Médicament

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Medicamento



Note to the Media

Research-Based Pharmaceutical Industry Present in Geneva to Witness World Health Assembly Decisions and Deliberations

Geneva, 16 May 2011 – As one of the 189 nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in official relations with the World Health Organization (WHO), and in line with WHO principles governing relations with NGOs, representatives of the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers & Associations (IFPMA) will be present to listen to the proceedings of the 64th World Health Assembly (WHA). The IFPMA will follow with particular interest decisions made by member governments on global health challenges directly involving the research-based pharmaceutical industry, such as pandemic influenza preparedness and fake medical products. The IFPMA will be taking particular note of the outcome of the World Health Assembly's discussions on the health related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and non communicable diseases (NCDs); as both demonstrate the need for global leadership and partnerships. The federation will also be interested in discussions on specific disease areas such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, and cholera.

The World Health Assembly agenda includes a review of the report of the WHO Open-Ended Working Group of Member States on Pandemic Influenza Preparedness (OEWG/PIP) which scopes out a global system to prepare for future pandemics. Recognizing a shared responsibility to help secure the world against future pandemic influenza outbreaks, the research-based pharmaceutical industry has engaged constructively in the OEWG/PIP process and stands by the collaborative commitments it has made to address this challenge¹. The Assembly will also consider the report by an external panel to review the "Implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005)" and the response to the 2009 H1N1 pandemic. The findings of the report and its recommendations together with the OEWG report represent an important basis to prepare and fight future pandemics and underscore the essential need for close collaboration between many different stakeholders.

The issue of substandard/spurious/falsely-labelled/falsified/counterfeit medical products is on the WHA agenda. The WHO has a crucial leadership role to play in helping to ensure that medicines everywhere are of high quality, safe and efficacious, and that they are also what they purport to be. The IFPMA supports the global effort to secure high quality medicines, and also hopes there will soon be consensus around priorities on fake medical products. The IFPMA's "Ten Principles on Counterfeit Medicines"² are based on the belief that the production and distribution of deliberately falsified medicines are an important threat to patients' health and a serious global crime which calls for a global course of action to be taken.

The IFPMA believes this 64th WHA is an important milestone in shaping the global approach that seeks to address the millions of deaths that are caused every year by non communicable diseases — 14 million of which are premature and could be averted or delayed. Given the sheer enormity of the challenge, in particular in low income and emerging countries, the approach needs to involve not only governments but also the private sector, nongovernmental organizations and each of us as individuals. Governments can have a direct impact by introducing or reinforcing fiscal and legislative measures to discourage, for example, the use of tobacco, by imposing restrictions and bans. At the same time, awareness-raising and communications campaigns are a key factor for prevention.

¹ News release: IFPMA Supports Principles of Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Decision, 18 April 2011 - http://www.ifpma.org/fileadmin/webnews/pdfs/IFPMA_News_Release_IFPMA_Supports_Principles_of_PIP_Decision_18_April2011.pdf

² www.ifpma.org/documents/NR13800/IFPMA_Ten_Principles_on_Counterfeit_Medicines_12May2010.pdf

The Assembly will also review the health-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In this area, IFPMA member companies have a strong track record with over 200 long-term partnership programs through which the research-based pharmaceutical industry works to improve health in low and middle income countries³ and make a tangible contribution to the health related MDGs, tackling HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases such as cholera, and malaria. At the half way point of the MDGs, in 2007, IFPMA members had made available nearly USD 10 billion dollars' worth of health assistance for access and capacity building in low and middle income countries, and over 1.3 billion public health interventions. The scale of their efforts is set to continue to achieve the MDGs in 2015. In addition, the IFPMA's member companies have been supporting the WHO in the fight against neglected tropical diseases through major research and development investments and donations for many years, but more recently there has been a stepping up of the industry's efforts in response to WHO's call for help. In 2010 there were five new major donation announcements⁴, and the number of tropical disease-related research and development projects is higher than ever before⁵.

(Ends)

³ IFPMA Developing World Health Partnerships Directory <http://www.ifpma.org/Healthpartnerships/>

⁴ <http://www.ifpma.org/index.php?id=4094>

⁵ http://www.ifpma.org/fileadmin/webnews/2010/pdfs/20101110_Status_RnD_for_DDW_10Nov2010.pdf

About the IFPMA:

The International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers & Associations is the global non-profit NGO representing the research-based pharmaceutical industry, including the biotech and vaccine sectors. Its members comprise 26 leading international companies and 44 national and regional industry associations covering low, middle and high income countries. The industry's R&D pipeline contains hundreds of new medicines and vaccines being developed to address global disease threats, including cancer, heart disease, HIV/AIDS and malaria. The IFPMA Clinical Trials Portal (www.ifpma.org/ClinicalTrials), the IFPMA's Ethical Promotion online resource (www.ifpma.org/EthicalPromotion/) and its Developing World Health Partnerships Directory (www.ifpma.org/HealthPartnerships) help make the industry's activities more transparent. The IFPMA supports a wide range of WHO technical activities, notably those relating to medicine efficacy, quality and safety. It also provides the secretariat for the International Conference on Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for Registration of Pharmaceuticals for Human Use (ICH).

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