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## IFPMA statement on Quad's Outcome Document on TRIPS

10 May 2022

On 3 May, 2022, the World Trade Organization (WTO) Director-General, shared the outcome [document](#) that emerged from the informal process conducted with the Quad (the European Union, India, South Africa and the United States) for an intellectual property response to COVID-19, with the broader membership. WTO Member States are now expected to further discuss it at the next TRIPS Council on 6-7 July.

**IFPMA and its members from the global biopharmaceutical industry reaffirm their position that weakening the intellectual property (IP) framework is counterproductive, and would undermine industry's ability to partner with academia, research institutes, and other private companies, to address the current and future pandemics.**

**Far from posing barriers, it is clear that IP-based incentives were central to the innovation and to the hundreds of collaborations that enabled the development, manufacturing, scale-up and distribution of novel COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics. While IP rights have never contributed to COVID-19 vaccine supply constraints, the "Quad proposal" is especially misguided now that it is widely acknowledged that there are no longer any such constraints.**

**The IP TRIPS Waiver is not only the wrong solution, but it is also an outdated proposal, that has been overtaken by events, since vaccine supplies are vastly outstripping demand. The current proposals should be shelved; and the focus should be directed, to getting vaccines into arms to those who need them most.**

2022 kicked off with COVID-19 vaccine production from both developing and developed country manufacturers reaching 12 billion doses within a year of the first vaccine being authorized. Today industry is able to produce over a billion vaccine doses each month. COVAX is now fully meeting its commitments and is even delaying delivery of doses at request of recipient countries unable to absorb them.

Since the beginning of 2022, there has been broad consensus that the challenge now is how to get the vaccines into the arms of people who need them, rather than problems related to scarcity of vaccine supplies. When the TRIPS Waiver was first proposed in 2020, it was already counter-productive to the challenge of scaling up manufacturing of potential COVID-19 vaccines, which at the time had not yet even been authorized. As vaccines became authorized, IP rights proved to be a powerful tool to enable the assembly of a global network of manufacturers that rose to meet that challenge in record time. ***Today, with vaccine oversupply and manufacturers shutting down production lines due to insufficient demand, the IP TRIPS Waiver - even on the Quad Proposal version - remains the wrong solution, as these events and the factual record plainly demonstrate.***



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Weakening intellectual property will do nothing to help the further scaling up of vaccine manufacturing; nor would it impact vaccine equity. The focus now needs to ensure that vaccines get into the arms of those who need them most, not least being the need to ensure countries have the resources to roll out vaccination programme. Waiving patents would not add a single additional vaccine dose administered.

Successful technology transfer is built on trust, know-how sharing and voluntary licensing. This is exactly what manufacturers have done on an unprecedented scale. As of now, there are 379 collaborations on vaccines manufacturing and 192 for therapeutics and, in addition, the multiple announcements of partnerships to improve geographical diversity of vaccine production.

The TRIPS Waiver proposals should be recognized for what they are – political posturing that are not only a distraction, but will create uncertainty that will undermine the industry’s ability to respond to the current and future pandemics. To increase equity, access to vaccines, and preparedness for future pandemics, ***the current proposals should be shelved and the focus should be directed to : supporting country readiness, contributing to equitable distribution, and driving innovation*** (Ref Three priorities to urgently increase access to COVID-19 vaccines).

## About IFPMA

IFPMA represents the research-based pharmaceutical companies and associations across the globe. The research-based pharmaceutical 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.