



Statement

IFPMA Statement under WHA 66 agenda item 17.1 on Substandard / spurious / falsely-labelled / falsified / counterfeit medical products

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Thank you on behalf of the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA), for the opportunity to provide our perspective on this public health issue related to fake medical products. IFPMA represents the global R&D pharmaceutical industry, whose primary contribution to global health is the development of innovative medicines and vaccines.

IFPMA supports the work of the Working Group of Member States on Substandards/Spurious/Falsely-Labelled/Falsified/Counterfeit Medical Products. Colleagues, time has come to make concrete efforts to kick start a new global agenda which puts patients' safety at the core. The new mechanism is instrumental in achieving this goal.

Fake medicines at best cheat people, at worst kill. Taking them can turn a treatable disease into a fatal one and can also foster drug resistance. It's a crime against patients and it is only right that we should expect the global health community to tackle it with the same vigor as any other health threat.

According to reporting to the Pharmaceutical Security Institute, incidents of counterfeiting were documented in every therapeutic category and every region of the world, and today 123 countries have experienced this phenomenon. In 2012, 19 new countries that were not affected before by counterfeit medicines were affected.

Counterfeiters do not discriminate. Fake versions of both generic and branded medicines have entered the supply chain in developed, as well as developing countries.

Moreover, the Internet has facilitated trade in counterfeit medicines, contributing to boost this criminal activity. It has been widely reported that patients have 1 in 2 chances to purchase fake medicines over the Internet from illegal sites that conceal their physical address.

The experience in fighting the trade and the existence of this serious crime threatening global public health shows that this is an issue which requires multi-stakeholder and multi-disciplinary collaboration both at the local and the global levels.

We need to raise the profile of medicines anti-counterfeiting efforts, strengthen laws and regulations, toughen penalties, look at best practices like the Medicrime Convention, and secure the legitimate supply chain by strengthening capacity where needed.

Patients worldwide are looking at today's forum, at WHO, as the one place where safety, efficacy, and high quality of medicines are protected.

As a partner in global health, we stand ready to play our part in stopping this deadly crime.