



# statement

## Addressing the global shortage of, and access to, medicines and vaccines

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24 January 2018

Mr. Chairman

IFPMA views the discussion on shortages as an issue of paramount importance to ensure sustainable access of patients around the world to the preventive and therapeutic interventions they need. In that light, the discussion of shortages is an opportunity to unite behind comprehensive solutions to strengthen health systems and to improve access to health care for patients. The majority of stockouts, especially outside high-income countries, result primarily from in-country issues, such as inaccurate forecasts, stock management and procurement delays.

Unfortunately, the report appears to focus narrowly on the controversial debate surrounding the protections that drive discovery of new health technologies. We regret that much of this important discussion has focused on the controversial UN High Level Panel on Access to Medicines report. 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. The report has failed to address the genuine barriers to access that are critical to meet the targets of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. It was never endorsed by UN Member States, and even the members of the Panel could not agree on its final recommendations.

For these reasons, neither the High Level Panel report nor any of its recommendations can be a sound basis for further consideration or action by the WHO or other organizations in the UN system.

IFPMA and its members are committed to working with national governments to address the systemic causes of shortages and the comprehensive range of barriers that can stand between people and the medical interventions they need. We welcome the WHO focus on Universal Health Coverage as a key component of the General Program of Work.