



statement

WHO EB 140, Item 7.4, Public Health implications of the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol

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Thank you Mr. Chairman,

IFPMA and its members appreciate WHO efforts to increase awareness amongst Member States about the significant public health implications related to implementation of the Nagoya Protocol.

We fully support the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and of the Nagoya Protocol, including facilitating access to genetic materials and sharing the benefits arising from their use.

We thank the Secretariat for the Report and its focus on how the manner in which the Protocol is implemented will be vital to safeguarding public health. Any implementing legislation must support this conclusion and not delay or frustrate responses to public health threats.

Mr. Chairman,

In our view the WHO should urge Member States to give very careful consideration to the public health implications of any legislation aimed at implementing the Nagoya Protocol. This is particularly true of legislation which might impact the timely sharing and subsequent use of genetic resources which are harmful to human health (ie pathogens). Legislation should take into account the need for timely and comprehensive sharing of pathogens, avoiding delays and other barriers to the development and adoption of diagnostics, vaccines and treatments.

In order to fully understand the impact of the Nagoya Protocol on public health we would also support a follow up to the Secretariat's Report which focuses on reviewing all existing international pathogen sharing mechanisms. Where these mechanisms result in public health/societal benefit, Member States should formally recognize them as special access and benefit sharing instruments under article 4.4 of the Nagoya Protocol. This is equally important for any WHO R&D 'blueprint' project relating to epidemic prevention.

In the meantime, we would encourage the WHO to support calls for elevating the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness framework (for pandemic flu) and the Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System mechanism (for seasonal flu) to the status of international instruments as soon as possible.