



IFPMA

PRESS RELEASE

Ahead of UN General Assembly, pharmaceutical industry underscores need for pandemic preparedness plans to support innovation and equity

- Global pharmaceutical industry trade body calls for pandemic preparedness plans to protect what worked well in response to COVID-19 pandemic and ensure equity in the roll out of vaccines and treatments.
- Industry underlines that future plans must ensure science and innovation can again deliver at record speed and scale. It is critical to ensure scientists continue to have unhindered access to pathogen data and supporting voluntary technology transfer.
- Pharmaceutical industry urges support for its proposals to ensure equitable access to vaccines, treatments, and diagnostics in lower income countries for future pandemics.

13 SEPTEMBER 2023, GENEVA – Ahead of discussions at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA78), the trade association representing the innovative pharmaceutical industry, the IFPMA, has warned that current pandemic preparedness plans should not undermine what worked well in response to COVID-19 and must support both “innovation and equity.”

The UNGA will see world leaders consider a political declaration on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response as one of three [health-focused high-level meetings](#). IFPMA has called for current plans to be strengthened to support the development of vaccines and treatments that will be needed for the next pandemic, alongside practical measures to ensure there is equity in access to medical countermeasures in lower-income countries.

Pharmaceutical industry commitment to innovate to address future pandemics

Effective vaccines and treatments were critical in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Recent research estimates that if effective vaccines are rolled out 100 days after the discovery of a new pathogen, the likelihood of a pandemic as deadly as COVID-19 taking place in the next decade [drops from 27.5% to 8.1%](#).

The pharmaceutical industry has committed to play an active role in plans to prevent and prepare for future pandemics, and is a partner to the [100 Days Mission](#), which sets the ambition to deliver safe and effective vaccines, treatments, and diagnostics within 100 days of a pandemic threat being identified.

Seven leading pharmaceutical companies have also established [The INTREPID Alliance](#), working to accelerate progress in the discovery and development of new antiviral treatments for future pandemics. The Alliance seeks to have 25 antiviral therapies for respiratory viral diseases with pandemic potential ready for Phase II/III clinical trials by 2026.

Placing innovation at the heart of future pandemic preparedness

However, progress will require coordinated action by industry, governments, and multilateral organizations. This will include putting in place the right incentives to support the pipeline of vaccines and treatments that will be needed to respond to future pandemics; ensuring scientists have rapid and unhindered access to pathogens and their genetic information; and the ability for companies to partner on a voluntary basis to rapidly scale up production.

IFPMA calls for these measures to be integrated into pandemic preparedness plans, including in the pandemic preparedness Political Declaration being considered by the UN General Assembly, alongside the focus on ensuring greater equity of access.

To rapidly scale-up production and deliver vaccines and treatments to at risk groups in the most affected regions, alongside wider measures, the industry has underlined the importance of sustainably boosting local capabilities in underserved regions and the need to support voluntary collaborations between companies, necessary to rapidly scale up production. [Almost 450 voluntary collaborations](#) are in place to support the global supply of COVID-19 vaccines and treatments. Pharmaceutical companies continue to extend their manufacturing and supply chain footprint via partnerships and investments in such regions.

Delivering equitable access to medical countermeasures in future pandemics

IFPMA has reiterated that future pandemic plans must also tackle the inequity we saw in the roll out of vaccines and treatments in response to COVID-19.

Last year, the industry published plans to address this in the [Berlin Declaration](#), proposing a commitment by pharmaceutical companies to reserve an allocation of real-time production of vaccines, treatments, and diagnostics for priority populations in lower-income countries. The plans were [endorsed by](#) the [Developing Countries Vaccines Manufacturing Network](#) and the [Biotechnology Industry Organization](#).

The Berlin Declaration is designed to provide a concrete solution to avoid a small number of countries securing the majority of supply of vaccines and treatments in the early months of a pandemic.

Alongside this, the industry has repeated that governments of countries that host manufacturing facilities need to commit to facilitating the export and import of raw materials and finished products to prevent trade restrictions hampering equitable rollout as we saw in response to COVID-19.

Thomas Cueni, Director General of the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations said:

“When the next pandemic hits, the success of our response will depend on how well we prepared and worked together in this moment between pandemics.

“The collective challenge facing us is to deliver innovation and equity: how to incentivize the research needed to develop the vaccines and treatments we will need, and how we make sure there is equitable access to these medical countermeasures across the globe when we have them.

“A new Political Declaration presents an opportunity to get all stakeholders around the table and get this right, but it is critical that we don’t undermine what worked well in response to COVID19 and instead strengthen the innovation ecosystem that underpins the development of new medicines and vaccines for when we need them most.”

Notes to editors

- The UNGA will see world leaders gather to consider political declarations on three important global health security priorities - pandemic preparedness, ending tuberculosis, and delivering universal healthcare coverage.
- The innovative pharmaceutical industry set out a vision for equitable access to medicines and vaccines in future pandemics in the [Berlin Declaration](#). The Declaration includes the commitment to reserve an allocation of real-time production of vaccines, treatments, and diagnostics for priority populations in lower income countries and take measures to make them available and affordable.
- Following the publication of the Berlin Declaration, IFPMA also published [five priorities for future pandemic preparedness and response](#), which set out action needed in the following areas: sustaining a thriving innovation ecosystem; building equitable access early on into pandemic responses; fostering sustainable manufacturing globally; removing barriers to trade; and ensuring greater country readiness.

- [The 100 Days Mission](#) was put forward by the UK during its G20 presidency in 2021. It aims to have safe and effective vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics within 100 days of an epidemic or pandemic threat being identified. IFPMA and the pharmaceutical industry continue to be a supporter of the 100 Days Mission.
- [The INTREPID Alliance](#) is a group of seven pharmaceutical companies who are working to accelerate progress in the discovery and development of new antiviral treatments for future pandemics and in support of the 100 Days Mission. The Alliance seeks to have 25 antiviral therapies for viral diseases with pandemic potential ready for Phase II/III clinical trials by 2026.

About IFPMA

The International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA) represents over 90 innovative pharmaceutical companies and associations around the world. Our industry's almost three million employees discover, develop, and deliver medicines and vaccines that advance global health. Based in Geneva, IFPMA has official relations with the United Nations and contributes industry expertise to help the global health community improve the lives of people everywhere. For more information, visit ifpma.org.