

STATEMENT

IFPMA Statement at the WIPO Standing Committee on the Law of Patents (SCP) 35

17 OCTOBER 2023, GENEVA – The International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA) thanks you for allowing us to contribute to the vital discussions within the Standing Committee on the Law of Patents (SCP). We represent leading research-based biopharmaceutical companies and national and regional industry associations worldwide. We also commend the Secretariat for enriching the committee's dialogues through their work on patents and health, and technology transfer.

The recent global pandemic has unequivocally demonstrated the critical role a strong intellectual property framework plays. This framework enabled the rapid development and distribution of safe and effective medical treatments and vaccines. We observed real-time innovation throughout the crisis. At this crucial moment, it is vital to support and maintain the proven and effective institutional mechanisms for dealing with crises like the COVID-19 pandemic.

Looking forward, innovation must be central to pandemic preparedness plans and align with Sustainable Development Goals, especially Target 3.8, which focuses on Universal Healthcare Coverage. We must create an environment conducive to both innovation and accessibility. This involves sensible policy-making and regulations that promote innovation, support clinical trials, and improve access to medical solutions. Investment in research and development to discover new treatments must also be a priority, and we need to put the right incentives in place to keep this vital pipeline flowing. Intellectual property protections act as crucial catalysts in this process.

Intellectual property rights also form the backbone of voluntary collaborations, such as licensing and technology transfer. These diverse collaboration models help the industry meet healthcare challenges. Intellectual property frameworks enable partnerships among a variety of partners, including research institutions, both large and small biotech firms, the Medicines Patent Pool, and other businesses. These voluntary partnerships allow companies to leverage each other's expertise and experience for mutual benefit.

The pharmaceutical industry has extensive experience in licensing and partnerships. For instance, Gilead and ViiV have been licensing HIV medicines to generic manufacturers for many years. During the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 450 voluntary collaborations emerged for vaccines and

treatments, mostly involving partners in developing countries. Remarkably, 87% of vaccine collaborations and 92% of therapeutic collaborations involved technology transfer. Recently, Novartis entered a licensing agreement for an oncology medicine within the Access to Oncology Medicines (ATOM) partnership, a groundbreaking initiative in non-communicable diseases.

Given these points, we strongly urge WIPO and its member states to engage in constructive policy discussions on intellectual property frameworks. These frameworks play a crucial role in advancing both science and the arts.

Thank you once again for your attention to these urgent matters.