

STATEMENT

WTO 14th Ministerial Conference: An opportunity to address trade, innovation, and health

24 MARCH 2026, GENEVA – As WTO Members convene in Yaoundé, Cameroon, for the 14th Ministerial Conference (MC14), discussions take place against an evolving global backdrop for international trade and supply chains. In this context, MC14 offers an important platform to maintain and strengthen the international frameworks that underpin scientific innovation, resilient supply chains, and better health outcomes for people worldwide.

A strong innovation ecosystem, built on effective IP protection, science-based regulation, trusted data flows, skilled workforces, and open trade, is essential for patients and for global health security. The pharmaceutical sector depends on a stable, predictable, and rules-based trade to bring new medicines to market and to maintain resilient, cross-border supply chains.

The pharmaceutical industry supports a reformed WTO, one that reinforces the organization's core mandate as a predictable, rules-based system multilateral trading system and promotes open trade. Meaningful reform is essential to reduce fragmentation and ensure that trade rules continue to support innovation, investment, and global health outcomes.

Private sector engagement must be an integral part of the reform process, bringing practical expertise that can help shape a more resilient system. As daily users of the trading system, the pharmaceutical industry stands ready to work closely with the WTO and its Members towards a positive agenda on trade and health. To this end, [together with more than 15 trade associations worldwide](#), IFPMA has put forward such a roadmap that focuses on four pillars:

- Strengthen the innovation ecosystem and protect intellectual property (IP) rights
- Eliminate tariffs and limit export restrictions
- Strengthen supply chains and improve trade facilitation
- Enhance quality and effectiveness of regulatory policies and procedures.

MC14 represents a timely opportunity to reaffirm a commitment to multilateral solutions that strengthen the frameworks for innovation, trade facilitation, and supply chain resilience, which enable the global trading system to deliver for the benefit of people, societies, and economies.