



STATEMENT

79th World Health Assembly (WHA79): Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on the WHO Pandemic Agreement

18 MAY 2026, GENEVA – The innovative pharmaceutical industry remains a critical partner in pandemic preparedness and response, with a strong track record of action during pandemics and Public Health Emergencies of International Concern.

Through the Berlin Declaration and IFPMA Equitable Access Statement, we have put forward concrete commitments to support timely and equitable access to medical countermeasures in both pandemic and interpandemic periods. Our commitments in the form of set-asides have been reflected in the Pandemic Agreement and would contribute to improved preparedness for the next pandemic. Effective preparedness and response depend on rapid access to pathogens and relevant data to enable research and development at speed and tailored to medical needs.

WHO's comparative advantage lies in its technical, normative, and convening functions, especially in health emergencies. We have consistently argued that these core responsibilities should be protected and prioritized.

Finally, with negotiators agreeing to another year of talks, important uncertainties remain in the PABS Annex. We remain concerned that proposals still under discussion would slow and diminish the development of the medicines and vaccines we need to respond rapidly to the next pandemic, rather than accelerating preparedness.

IFPMA is committed to engaging constructively as the IGWG takes forward these unresolved issues in the next phases of the negotiations, and we remain fully committed to strengthening pandemic preparedness and response.