

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

Executive Board

117th Session

January 2006

Global Framework on Essential Health Research and Development

The Executive Board,

Having considered the report of the WHO Commission on Intellectual Property Rights, Innovation and Public Health;^[1] and following current developments regarding access to medicine and the need to urgently develop new medicines and other health care technologies,

RECOMMENDS to the Fifty-ninth World Health Assembly the adoption of the following resolution:

The Fifty-ninth World Health Assembly,

Recalling Resolutions WHA52.19, WHA53.14, WHA54.10, WHA56.27, and WHA57.14;

Considering the paucity of safe, adapted and affordable new medicines developed for infectious diseases like Aids, malaria and tuberculosis, and the lack of drugs, vaccines and diagnostics for tropical diseases or other illnesses that primarily affect the world's poorest,

Recognizing the importance of supporting the development of treatments for diseases that have small client populations,

Concerned about the need for appropriate, effective and safe health tools for patients living in resource- poor settings,

Noting that more than 70 percent of new drug approvals are for medicines that do not provide incremental benefits over existing ones,

Considering the importance of developing new medicines to address emerging health threats such as multi-drugs resistant TB, and other poverty-related and infectious diseases.

Noting the insufficient funding for research and development for new vaccines for AIDS and other illnesses,

Recognizing the importance of global public goods such as the Human Genome Project, and the increasing relevance of open and accessible public research in advancing science and the transfer of technology,

Noting in addition the promise of new open models for the development of medical

science, the enhanced participation and access to scientific advances, and increase knowledge;

Noting the importance of public private partnerships (PPPs) devoted to the development of new essential drugs and research tools, but concerned about the necessity for the governments in setting a needs-based priority agenda for health, and granting political support and sustainable sources of funding for such initiatives,

Recognizing the importance of public and private investment in the development of new medical technologies,

Considering that a number of developing countries have been strengthening their capacity for new health technologies, and that their role will be increasingly critical,

Recognizing that intellectual property rights are one of several important tools to promote innovation, creativity activity and the transfer of technology,

Recognizing at the same time the importance of providing for a proper balance between intellectual property rights and the public domain, and the need to implement intellectual property rules in a manner that is consistent with the basic human right to health and the promotion of follow-on innovation,

Concerned about the impact of high drug prices on access to medicine, and the need to implement intellectual property laws in a manner that reconciles incentives for development of new medicines with the need to promote access to all, consistent with Paragraph 4 of the Doha Declaration on TRIPS and Public Health,

Aware of the need for a new global framework to provide adequate and sustainable levels of financial support for patient-driven research, and including in particular for priority medical research,

Having considered a 24 February 2005 request from 162 scientists, public health experts, law professors, economists, government officials, members of parliaments, NGOs and others calling for an evaluation of proposals for a new global trade framework on medical R&D.

Considering the Global Appeal on R&D for Neglected Diseases launched on 8th June 2005 with the support of 18 Nobel Laureates, and the support of over 2500 scientists and health experts, academics, NGOs, public research institutes, governments officials and members of parliament, calling for new policy rules to stimulate essential health R&D, especially for the most neglected patients;

Noting the need to promote innovation in the mechanisms that support innovation,

Recognizing the importance of strengthening research capacity of local public institutions

and businesses in developing countries to contribute and participate in research and development efforts,

Urges Member States:

(1) to make global health and medicines a strategic sector and take determined action to direct R&D priorities according to the needs of the patients, especially those in resource-poor settings, and harness collaborative R&D initiatives involving disease-endemic countries;

(2) to take an active part, together with the World Health Organization and other international actors, in the development and establishment of a global framework for defining global health priorities, supporting essential medical research and development predicated upon the principle of equitable sharing of the costs of research and development, and incentives to invest in useful research and development in the areas of patients' need and public interest.

(3) to ensure that progress in basic science and biomedicine is translated into improved, safe and affordable health products – drugs, vaccines and diagnostics – to respond to all patients' needs, especially those living in poverty, and that essential medicines are rapidly delivered to people;

Requests the Director-General:

(1) to establish a working group of interested Member –States to consider proposals to establish a global framework for supporting needs-driven research, consistent with appropriate public interest issues.

(2) to submit a progress report of the working group of interested member -States to the Sixtieth World Health Assembly (May 2008) and a final report with concrete proposals to the Executive Board at its 121st session (January 2009).