

16.2 Follow up on the Consultative Expert Working Group on Research and Development Coordination and Financing

Thank you, Chair, for the opportunity to address the distinguished delegates on behalf of MMI, PHM and UAEM.

In the wake of the current Zika epidemic and the failed response to the Ebola crisis, the principles put forth by the CEWG are more crucial than ever in the discourse of ensuring access to affordable medicines for all. Thousands of students across the world, together with 450 academics and 4 Nobel Laureates have recently come together to plead for a needs-driven R&D-system that is guided by affordability, accessibility, effectiveness, efficiency, equity, and grounded in the concepts of de-linkage and open-knowledge.

We welcome progress made in monitoring R&D efforts in global health via the Observatory. However, we urge MS to recognize that the Observatory will only achieve its ultimate aim, if it is part of a wider framework, one that addresses not only NTDs, but also encompasses the crushing burden of NCDs, AMR and all other disease types suffering from the access & innovation crisis in both developed and developing countries.

The WHO aimed to address the friction¹ between trade rules and the human right to health with the establishment of the Commission on Intellectual Property Rights, Innovation and Public Health in 2003. Over 10 years later, this issue has not been solved and hence the convening of the UN High Level Panel on Access to Medicines with a similar aim. We remain encouraged by the sense of urgency expressed by the formation of this Panel and the UN High Level Meeting on AMR; and we call upon Member States to ensure there remains policy coherence between all WHO-led R&D initiatives including the proposed R&D Blueprint for emerging pathogens and the AMR Global Action plan. Member States shall halt the ongoing fragmented efforts in order to progress towards the full implementation of the CEWG-principles and CEWG recommendations.

It is time that Member States send a clear message to the world by recognizing that the current ill monopoly-based system is unsustainable for all nations and limits access to affordable medicines by those in need. We urge Member States to not drop the CEWG-process to the oblivion and to continue the discussions in order to find concrete solutions, such as an R&D Agreement. Member States have to keep in mind that we cannot afford 10 more years of idle discussions.