



statement

Special Session of World Health Assembly on Pandemic Treaty

29 November – 1 December 2021

IFPMA welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Special Session of the World Health Assembly in this unique and unprecedented moment to take lessons learned from fighting COVID-19 into tackling future global health crises. The COVID response has revealed to all the value of the rapid development and manufacture of vaccines and treatments, the importance of true multistakeholder collaboration, the power of regulatory cooperation and the importance of vaccine confidence and trust in public health officials. We also acknowledge that much more needs to be done to ensure equitable and fair distribution and access of pandemic products around the world. Vaccine supply continues to expand and we are committed to playing our part in improving equitable access.

However, we are concerned that some of the focus of discussions throughout this pandemic have, whilst being well-intentioned, the potential to detract from the real issues and undermine the successes we have achieved together. Weakened IP in future pandemics will undoubtedly lead to a decline in R&D and impede the ability to collaborate that is essential to the COVID-19 response. Complex negotiations between stakeholders around potential benefits will also hinder immediate and timely pathogen sharing, also undermining R&D efforts.

We view the Special Session as an important opportunity for governments to show leadership and to re-commit to increased global solidarity for the future and urge countries to focus on what matters most, such as building strong health systems, securing sustainable financing, ensuring effective pandemic procurement and continuing to build and foster regulatory agility and harmonization.

The private sector is crucial to developing and scaling-up diagnostics, vaccines and therapies for pandemics. Industry should be an active participant in collaborative efforts to design a fit-for-purpose global health crisis infrastructure informed by our COVID-19 experience. Throughout the WGPR process, we have welcomed the inclusion of the private sector as a valued contributor through the role given to IFPMA to actively attend, and hope that the private sector will continue to be part of any negotiation process launched after the World Health Assembly Special Session to provide constructive and meaningful input towards the creation of any pandemic response. We are committed to working with governments, international organizations and other stakeholders to make sure that policies and plans are developed in a way that achieves the effective response the world requires to tackle any future pandemic.