



STATEMENT

IFPMA statement at the seventh meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body on Pandemic Accord

6 NOVEMBER 2023, GENEVA – We are grateful for the opportunity to participate in this critical meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB). IFPMA reaffirms the pharmaceutical industry's ongoing commitment to engage constructively in this process.

The ability for pharmaceutical companies to develop and deliver new vaccines and treatments, at a speed and scale never seen before, is a central lesson from the COVID-19 pandemic. This was made possible by our dedication to research and development, supported by a system that incentivizes innovation and partnerships. It is essential that preserving and building on this ecosystem is central to our plans to prepare for future pandemics.

Rather than preserve these elements that were so vital in our pandemic response, the proposals contained in the current draft of the Pandemic Accord would undermine this innovation ecosystem and in turn our ability to rapidly develop medical countermeasures in response to the next pandemic.

Firstly, the introduction of the Pathogen Asset Benefit Sharing (PABS) Model and complex legal frameworks, such as the Standard Material Transfer Agreements, risks creating unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles. These would deter the scientific research needed, particularly within the biotech sector, compromising the flexibility and cooperation that were vital in our recent pandemic response.

Secondly, the draft does not adequately tackle the existing impediments posed by Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) laws that try to monetize pathogens. The rapid sharing of pathogen data was central in COVID vaccines being developed at record speed. The proposed Accord would slow the sharing of pathogen samples, and, in turn, slow our response to the next pandemic.

Moreover, the draft lacks a clear strategy for a robust procurement mechanism for low-income countries and fails to adequately address trade barriers that could hinder the global distribution of medical supplies. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the negative impacts of not having immediate funding for procurement, leading to unequal vaccine distribution—a mistake that should not be replicated.

IFPMA shares the ambition for a pandemic treaty that improves equitable access to medical countermeasures in future pandemics. The INB must look to practical solutions, such as those set out by industry in the Berlin Declaration, and create a new social contract that eliminates export restrictions and underpins a strong and effective response to future pandemics.

In closing, IFPMA remains committed to collaborating on how a new global framework can support improved response to future pandemics. However, as it stands, the world's future pandemic preparedness would be better served without a treaty rather than with a treaty based on the current draft text.