IFPMA

STATEMENT

Fourth meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-4) on plastics pollution

23 APRIL 2024, OTTAWA, CANADA – The International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA) lends its full support to an ambitious UN Global Plastics "Instrument" that can help create globally harmonized rules on plastic. This is key to secure the scale and effect needed if we are to succeed in transitioning away from plastic where it is possible to do so safely while ensuring continued access to medical and medicinal products.

The innovative pharmaceutical industry is fostering innovative changes in line with the plastics agenda, while continuing to provide quality, safe, and effective treatments for patients worldwide. Almost every medicine and vaccine currently used around the world today involves plastics, in the manufacture, delivery, and packaging. We are, however, currently limited by a lack of safe and effective alternatives that would meet our stringent quality standards and that are available at the appropriate scale. And even when alternatives become available, the process and time needed to change the use in manufacturing, delivery, and/or packaging and to secure the necessary regulatory approvals will be substantial.

When negotiating the Instrument, it will therefore be important to consider the specific challenges faced by the health sector and allow for tailored provisions, such as targeted extended compliance periods, that would give us the necessary time to identify and seek approval for alternatives, where feasible, and prevent disruptions to the pharmaceutical supply chain.

Harmonization with existing legislation, where possible, will be essential for the continued smooth operation of global supply chains. Consistent rules across sectors and international supply chains will facilitate effective implementation and reduce compliance risks for businesses.

For these reasons, we urge negotiators to consider the impacts that the Instrument may have on access to medical and medicinal products and to ensure that appropriate measures are included to avoid unintended consequences.

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