



STATEMENT

WHO EMRO RC71: Promoting collaborative action to accelerate the response to antimicrobial resistance in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

16 OCTOBER 2024, DOHA, QATAR – Thank you for the opportunity to make this statement on behalf of IFPMA. This is a crucial year for advancing action on AMR. Eight years after the first ever High-level Meeting on AMR in 2016, the second one concluded in New York last month. We welcome the ambitious agenda set forth by UN Member States and stand ready to work with all partners to advance progress. We further welcome the regional leadership of Saudi Arabia, host of the Fourth Global High-level Ministerial Conference on AMR under the theme of “From Declaration to Implementation” next month, and Qatar, host of the WISH Summit. We look forward to contributing to both.

We appreciate the focus placed by WHO EMRO on accelerating the response to AMR in the region and underscoring the importance of a sustainable AMR response to achieve UHC and health security.

We are supportive of the three core strategic priorities and the cross-cutting strategic priority on effective governance and financing, which recognizes the important role of all stakeholders, including the private sector.

While we have seen progress in the fight against AMR over the years, important gaps remain, which the paper also recognizes. AMR is already associated with millions of deaths globally and is projected to result in significant economic loss as resistance increases, unless action is taken.

Focus should be given to solutions that can address the antibiotic pipeline and access challenges, which needs to include working with industry. It is critical we recognize the unsustainable economics of antibiotic research and development (R&D) as a core driver of the deteriorating clinical pipeline, which, together with diverse barriers to access, contributes to uneven availability of effective antibiotics.

Well-established and tested solutions are at our disposal through pull incentives to bring about renewed investment and innovation. Recent analysis published by IFPMA suggests that, without effective incentives and additional investment, the pipeline will continue to decline. Experts and researchers continue to move to more attractive areas of medical R&D, with an estimated 50% drop

in antibiotic R&D workforce between 1995 and 2020. If effective pull incentives are put into place, we could see twice as many antibiotic approvals over the next decade and three times as many projects in clinical development.

However, innovation alone is not enough. In alignment with good stewardship, access to both new and existing antibiotics is key. Improving sustainable access to antibiotics will require a broad set of measures, tailored to the context of each country or region.

Finally, we welcome the inclusion of vaccines in the paper and the need to expand immunization programs. Vaccines are a powerful tool for preventing infections and reducing antibiotic consumption.

The innovative pharmaceutical industry remains committed to playing its part and working with stakeholders to accelerate action on AMR.