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**IFPMA Weekly Update  
15 May 2020**

**Communications**

Media relations for COVID-19 include non-paid editorial placements in major international news outlets. Thomas Cueni has authored an opinion piece for The Financial Times to reiterate the key importance of IP and collaboration, online publication planned for Monday 18 May and in newspaper edition on Tuesday, 19 May. Thomas has given interviews with a number of major TV news outlets, including CNN, BBC and German TV NDR. The [interview with CNN](#) on pharmaceutical industry and vaccine manufacturing has been aired on [Quest Means Business - CNN.com](#), and [First Move with Julia Chatterley](#). A BBC World News programme will air an interview with Thomas on Monday or Tuesday 18/19 May. Other interviews given by Thomas have already resulted in coverage, e.g. Agence France Presse (AFP) ([Covid-19 : tous égaux devant le vaccin?](#)). We await coverage from Politico, SwissInfo and Health Policy Watch. Quartz news outlet will be publishing next week a piece on vaccines manufacturing that Laetitia Bigger has contribute towards.

To secure share of voice for the pharmaceutical industry around the World Health Assembly, Thomas is giving a briefing to the ACANU (Association of Accredited Correspondents at the UN) on 18<sup>th</sup> May. Positive media coverage and share of voice is also the objective for the next IFPMA COVID-19 global media briefing on 28<sup>th</sup> May that will focus on COVID-19 vaccine development. There will be a push to support the launch of the IFPMA, ABPI on joint report “Generation Gavi: partnering to protect health through life saving vaccines” in advance of the Gavi (the Vaccine Alliance) replenishment conference (3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> June).

IFPMA will launch a new Infographic “[Health for All: Our Collaborations Supporting the SDGs](#)” based on the collaborations featured on [Global Health Progress](#), IFPMA’s knowledge hub highlighting over 250 collaborations between our industry and more than 1200 partners to support the SDGs. The new Global Health Progress [infographic](#) summarizes the impact of our industry’s health partnerships and communicates it in a creative way. For you to easily share the new infographic with your networks, IFPMA Comms team has developed [social media cards](#), each highlighting specific areas of impact. The infographic is available in [Print](#) and [Digital](#) versions. The infographic will be launched on 16 May in support of the WHO virtual campaign [Walk the Talk](#) ahead of the World Health Assembly.

Finally, the last two paid articles resulting from IFPMA’s [partnership with The Guardian](#) were published this week: “[Sharing the load: how regulatory cooperation improves global access to medicines](#)” and “[This is the next frontier in scientific innovation’: how the Gavi Alliance is helping to immunise the world](#)”.

Contact: [Abigail Jones](#), [Morgane De Pol](#)

### **Costa Rica “Call to Action” on COVID-19**

The WHO “pre-announced” Friday the “Costa Rica call to action”, which builds on a previous proposal from President Quesada to Dr. Tedros proposing the creation of a “repository of existing knowledge” with various sorts of assets, such as IP, data and designs, for use of member states. Costa Rica, WHO and a group like-minded countries and stakeholder have since developed a “call to action” with very problematic concepts, as it calls for very rigid conditions in licensing (i.e., global) and recommends stringent access clauses for initiatives developed with public funding. The call to action is now open for countries to join.

The initiative is scheduled to be launched on May 29 and it is unclear if a new mechanism will also be created or announced at that date. IFPMA has stepped up its advocacy, both with Geneva ambassadors and the media, to gather additional intel and highlight the critical role played by IP and the need to avoid any duplicative work. An IFPMA statement is also being prepared to align messaging and allow us to respond to the initiative.

### **World Health Assembly: Focus on COVID-19**

The 73rd World Health Assembly (WHA 73) will take place in virtual format, starting noon on Monday 18 May, ending no later than Tuesday 19 May depending on proceedings. As widely anticipated, the agenda for WHA 73 will focus on COVID-19, and the only Resolution likely to be discussed is that of “COVID-19 Response” which was tabled by the European Union and will be adopted on Tuesday.

Overall, the resolution is very positive and inclusive. It follows broadly the same spirit of the recently-approved UNGA resolution on access to COVID products, though is more technical in nature. The mentions to the TRIPS agreement are better than “standard WHA language” and could be interpreted as calling on any initiative or measures to respect the basic rules of the international IP system (unlike some proposals being floated). The resolution makes positive reference to ACT-A and also calls for collaboration with the private sector. Interestingly, calls for patent pooling are framed in the context of existing mechanisms.

IFPMA undertook robust outreach activities with various missions, including to several ambassadors, to inform industry’s views on the process. New in COVID-19 times, DG Thomas Cueni has hosted a Member State briefing and bilateral “WebEx diplomacy”. The IFPMA secretariat has held a number of calls with the relevant Committees to keep members fully updated on developments as they evolve, given the dynamic nature of negotiations on this text and other COVID-19 initiatives. IFPMA is also providing other key policy advocacy material relating to WHA 73 through the Global Health Committee ahead of the virtual event.

Contact: [Vanessa Peberdy](#), [Grega Kumer](#)

### **Access to COVID-19 tools (ACT) Accelerator**

Vaccines. Progress has been achieved with the Vaccine Partnership (COVAX) co-conveners - CEPI and Gavi - on industry engagement in the Coordination Group and on the identification of skilled experts for the R&D&M Investment Committee. We expect the first meeting of the Coordination Group to take place next week, with the first decision of the R&D&M Investment Committee in two weeks. Further discussions will be held shortly on industry representation in the Development and Manufacturing workstream, in particular on the technical review group responsible for an end-to-end

oversight and steering of project execution and in the SWAT teams in charge of cross-cutting standardization and comparability in regulatory, manufacturing, and clinical. Gavi will also kick-off soon consultation with all concerned parties, including industry, on the proposed Gavi Advance Market Commitment (AMC) for COVID-19 vaccines - aiming to launch it at the Global Vaccine Summit on 4 June 2020.

Contact: [Laetitia Bigger](#)

Therapeutics (Tx). IFPMA continues to actively engage in the Tx Partnership, however, clarity on key elements such as relationship to existing initiatives, scope, focus, funding and role of the private sector remains elusive in this pillar. Paul Schreier of Wellcome Trust and Philippe Duneton Unitaïd are now confirmed as Tx pillar co-chairs and the skeleton of the Tx workstreams have been announced: (1) “Rapid evidence assessment” of candidates to coordinate clinical trials portfolio and scientific direction led by Gates, (2) “Market preparedness” to facilitate market entry and supply at scale led by Unitaïd, (3) “Adequate deployment in all countries” to ensure procurement, equitable distribution and delivery at scale and in all settings led by Global Fund, and (4) “Costing/financing” as a cross-cutting group to identify resource needs for successful delivery of partnership work. WHO commented on the need to include prequalification as an important component of workstream 2, and need to “engage” the Essential Medicines List and have expedited WHO guidelines for use before procurement (workstream 3). The plan is to address various lingering questions through “fleshing-out” of the workstreams. Given the on-going, broader MLO debate on regulatory, IP and pricing issues for COVID-19 therapies, IFPMA will push to have industry representation in the workstream discussions.

Contact: [Fumie Griego](#)

### **COVID-19 Regulatory Guiding Principles**

Earlier this week the Regulatory Science Committee published its Regulatory Guiding [Principles](#) as part of IFPMA’s COVID-19 Information Hub. These Principles are designed to illustrate the R&D-based industry’s commitments at a time when ‘normal’ production, supply chains and business operations are adversely impacted and massively challenged. Four key themes are featured: 1) collaborating with national regulatory authorities to define science-based strategies for ensuring availability of COVID-19 medicines and vaccines; 2) progressing research into new treatments and prevention of other conditions; 3) maintaining supply of medicines and vaccines; and 4) ensuring medicines and vaccines continue to meet appropriate standards for quality and safety. These Principles also form the basis for outreach with key regulatory stakeholders and are being shared broadly with national associations.

Contact: [Janis Bernat](#)

### **Reinforcing Ethics & Business Integrity Amidst COVID-19**

On 7 May IFPMA hosted a webinar on “Reinforcing Ethics and Business Integrity amidst COVID-19”, jointly convened with the *APEC Business Ethics Initiative* (overseen by the US Government), of which IFPMA holds the Industry Co-Chair. As economies around the world actively address the COVID-19 pandemic, we are reminded of the importance of international collaboration to reinforce high standards of business ethics and integrity in the bio- pharmaceutical sector. A panel of four Chief Ethics and Compliance Officers (Amgen, Bayer, GSK & Pfizer) discussed the following key recommendations for IFPMA member associations:

1. Integrate the importance of ethics/integrity into your communications with member companies, the media, and relevant stakeholders (i.e., during sessions with the government, HCPs, or otherwise related to COVID-19);
2. Assign a focal point on ethics/integrity issues into your internal task force on COVID-19 to ensure the issue is included as a core component of your activities;
3. Prepare for medium and long-term changes to your codes and best practices. Flexibility is not the goal – standards should not be lowered during this time.
4. Continue to message the importance of a culture of integrity (Ethos) and don't revert to operationalized compliance (do and don't lists, etc.).
5. Lean into collective action and multi-stakeholder collaboration to reinforce ethics/integrity wherever possible, such as Consensus Frameworks.

Contact: [Sofie Melis](#)

### **COVID-19 Africa Engagement**

Through its engagement with NEPAD Business Foundation, IFPMA has been invited to attend a SADC Pharmaceutical working group online working discussion which seeks to explore how the pharmaceutical industry can support both the AUDA-NEPAD and SADC COVID-19 response plans. The call will take place on Wednesday May 20. IFPMA Secretariat is coordinating with the member companies also invited to participate in the call to ensure industry alignment.

Contact: [Cynthia Genolet](#)

### **COVID-19 G20 Engagement**

The *Second Extraordinary G20 Trade & Investment Ministerial Meeting* was held on 14 May. In their [statement](#), the Ministers reaffirmed the G20 Trade and Investment Ministers' determination to "cooperate and coordinate to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on trade and investment and to contribute to laying a solid foundation for global economic recovery based on a strong, sustainable, balanced, and inclusive growth". The Ministers endorse a "G20 Actions to Support World Trade and Investment in Response to COVID-19", which outline short-term and long-term actions to achieve these objectives. They highlighted their support for and continued cooperation with international organizations in their contributions to the management of the pandemic.

Contact: [Sara Amini](#)

### **Transparency Debate at the OECD**

In his capacity of Chair of the *Business at OECD* (BIAC) Health Committee, IFPMA DG Thomas Cueni attended the 7 May virtual meeting of the OECD Expert Group on Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices. One of the main agenda items aimed to address Increasing Transparency in Pharmaceutical Markets, with discussions on three project proposals: a) exploring the feasibility and impact of sharing information on prices across countries; b) sharing information on managed entry agreements for new medicines, and; c) monitoring of access to medicines in OECD countries. Many Member States spoke in favour of the OECD's proposed projects, with the US Delegation reiterating their support for price transparency in line with their position at the 2019 WHA and calling for the OECD to expedite their work in this area. Notably, the Czech delegation urged for caution and incited the OECD to consider the unintended consequences of prices transparency before moving forward with this workstream, while many other delegations raised concerns about duplicative efforts on OECD data collection activities that may already be undertaken by databases such as the EURIPID. Thomas Cueni focused his intervention, delivered on behalf of BIAC, on welcoming OECD's engagement with industry in the

project outlined, while reiterating concerns regarding unintended consequences of price transparency on access to medicines, and the need to consider contractual confidentiality of data that OECD intends to share between countries. In addition to the interventions made by Thomas Cueni during the meeting, IFPMA will share with the OECD detailed written comments, drawing from contributions shared by IFPMA members.

Contact: [Sara Amini](#)

**External Meetings and Events (Week of 18 May):**

- **May 18-19:** Virtual 73rd World Health Assembly - live webcast can be followed [here](#)
- **May 22:** [WHO Executive Board meeting](#)

**IFPMA Meetings and Events (Week of 18 May):**

- **May 19:** Weekly Covid-19 Heads of Associations Update
- **May 20:** IFPMA Vaccines Committee meeting
- **May 20:** Weekly Covid-19 Committee Update
- **May 22:** IFPMA CEO Steering Committee

**IFPMA Operating Status:** *IFPMA offices remain closed and IFPMA staff continue to work from home. IFPMA is monitoring implementation of Swiss Federal Council's plans to [further ease measures from 11 May](#). Similar to other offices in Switzerland, if conditions allow, some IFPMA staff may return to the office on a voluntary and rotational basis – at the earliest, June 8.*

Please note: IFPMA will be “closed” for Ascension Day and a bridge holiday on May 21-22; however, we will continue to cover essential meetings and events.