



## **WHO 68<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly, 2015**

Provisional agenda item 17.5 – Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property

Speaker: Shailly Gupta

MSF strongly supports the 2022 extension of the mandate of the Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property.

We are far from fully implementing the Global Strategy. Every day MSF sees the important role the Global Strategy, if fully and properly implemented, could play in ensuring access and innovation to medicines.

Today we see increasing failures with our current system of research and development (R&D) with respect to Ebola, AMR or a range of neglected diseases. New essential medicines are coming to market at unaffordable prices, including up to 1,000 USD per pill for medicines to treat hepatitis C. The price of the basic vaccines package has increased 68-fold since 2001, straining immunisation systems worldwide.

Instead of new approaches to R&D that could ensure needs-based innovation and access, some governments, pushed by multinational pharmaceutical companies, are seeking to increase intellectual property (IP) protection worldwide, which will only deepen the challenges that MSF and others face in accessing treatments, diagnostics and vaccines.

For example, 12 countries are continuing negotiations of the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement this month. This trade agreement could be the most damaging ever for access to medicines. India, the ‘pharmacy of the developing world’, is under continuous pressure by developed countries and drug companies to introduce strict IP rules that will undermine access to medicines worldwide.

We hope WHO, with an extended mandate, can take bold and decisive action, working with Member States to introduce policies to increase access to medicines and introduce new models of innovation that de-link the financing of R&D from the incentive of high prices. This can address the shortcomings of the patent system that leaves millions of patients unable to access unaffordable new medical tools, or simply without the tools that the patent monopoly system neglects to create.