

# Intergovernmental Working Group on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property

Dermot Maher, Stop TB Department, World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland

On behalf of

Dr Howard Zucker, DG Representative on Intellectual Property, Innovation and Public Health  
and

Dr Elil Renganathan, Executive Secretary, PHI Secretariat



**World Health  
Organization**

# Intergovernmental Working Group on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property

- In May 2006, the Fifty-ninth World Health Assembly adopted resolution WHA59.24 requesting the DG to convene a meeting of an IGWG open to all interested Member States to draw up a global strategy and plan of action in order to provide a medium-term framework based on the recommendations of the WHO Commission on Intellectual Property Rights, Innovation and Public Health.



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In accordance with resolution WHA59.24, the IGWG will:

- draw up a global strategy and plan of action that aims at, inter alia, securing an enhanced and sustainable basis for needs-driven, essential health research and development relevant to diseases that disproportionately affect developing countries;
- report to the 60th World Health Assembly through the EB on the progress made, giving particular attention to needs-driven research and other potential areas for early implementation action; and
- submit the final global strategy and plan of action to the 61st World Health Assembly in May 2008 through the Executive Board.

# Intergovernmental Working Group on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property

Other elements of WHA 59.24 for WHO action:

- To continue to issue public health-based research and development reports, identifying from a public health perspective, gaps and needs related to pharmaceuticals, and to report on them periodically.
- To continue to monitor, from a public health perspective, in consultation as appropriate with other international organizations, the impact of Intellectual Property Rights and other issues addressed in the commission's report, on the development of, and access to, health care products, and report thereon to the Health Assembly

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In house:

- A small secretariat has been established within WHO headquarters in order to support the IGWG process.
- A steering committee has also been established that includes ADGs from headquarters and senior staff from all regional offices.



# Intergovernmental Working Group on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property

## Discussions in regional committees:

- Resolution WHA59.24 was considered by all Regional Committees in 2006.
- The Regional Committee for South-East Asia and the Regional Committee for the Americas both adopted resolutions calling on Member States and the regional directors to promote action at regional level.
- A regional consultation was also held in the South East Asia Region before the first session of the IGWG in December 2006.

# Intergovernmental Working Group on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property

## Web-based public hearing (1-15 November 2006):

- In order to solicit inputs from a wide group of interested stakeholders, web-based public hearings being held in November before the first session of IGWG (4-8 December 2006).
- Thirty-two submissions were received from governments, academia, public/private partnerships, product-development partnerships and industry. Contributions were available to the public through the web site and a synopsis was presented at the IGWG meeting.

# Intergovernmental Working Group on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property

## First session of the IGWG :

- The IGWG held its first session from 4 to 8 December 2006 in Geneva.
- Member States that had already taken steps towards implementing aspects of resolution WHA59.24 and the Secretariat reported their progress to the Group



# Intergovernmental Working Group on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property

## First session of the IGWG :

- The IGWG considered six elements of a draft plan of action: *prioritizing research and development needs; promoting research and development; building and improving innovative capacity; improving delivery and access; ensuring sustainable financing mechanisms; and establishing monitoring and reporting systems.*
- In the ensuing discussion, Member States added two new elements: *transfer of technology, and management of intellectual property.*



# Intergovernmental Working Group on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property

## First session of the IGWG :

- An outcome document detailing issues raised in the IGWG was prepared and circulated to member states for review and comment.
- It was agreed that additional submissions on the plan of action or the global strategy should reach the Secretariat by the end of February 2007.
- The input received during and after the IGWG meeting will form the basis of a revised working document, which will be made available in July 2007, before the second session of the Working Group in October 2007

# Intergovernmental Working Group on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property

## First session of the IGWG :

- The IGWG also discussed several potential areas for early implementation, taking into account the recommendations of the Commission on Intellectual Property Rights, Innovation and Public Health.
- As not enough time had been devoted at the first session to identifying and discussing adequately such actions; it was agreed to forward the list of possible points for early implementation to the Executive Board at its 120th session and to the Sixtieth World Health Assembly, indicating that these suggestions had not been endorsed by Member States.

# Intergovernmental Working Group on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property

## First session of the IGWG – other outcomes:

- a fast-track process for enabling NGOs which were not yet in official relations with WHO to allow their participate in the second session of the IGWG was recommended. This will be discussed by the Standing Committee on NGOs at the 120th session of the Executive Board in January 2007.
- In order to expand the pool of experts and entities invited to attend sessions of the IGWG, and ensure a balanced regional, gender and developing/developed country representation, Member States are also being invited to submit proposals for the second session, for decision by the Director-General after consultation with the Officers of the IGWG.

# Intergovernmental Working Group on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property

- The IGWG plans to hold its second and final session in October 2007 in order to finalize the draft global strategy and plan of action.
- Consultations at regional and sub-regional levels will continue in between the two sessions, and the Officers of the IGWG will continue to meet as necessary to consider other possible inter-sessional work and detailed arrangements for the second session.



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For further information contact:

Dr Howard Zucker, DG Representative on Intellectual Property,  
Innovation and Public Health

[zuckerh@who.int](mailto:zuckerh@who.int) (tel +41-22-7911807)

Dr Elil Renganathan, Executive Secretary, PHI Secretariat

[renganathane@who.int](mailto:renganathane@who.int) (tel +41-22-7915508)

IGWG documents available on <http://www.who.int/gb/phi/>

