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For immediate release

WHO Member States Must Grasp Opportunity to Improve Medicines Price Transparency

World Health Assembly Resolution Can Set the Right Course for Governments and Patients

JOHANNESBURG—At a side-event during the World Health Organization’s (WHO) 2nd Fair Pricing Forum in South Africa today, civil society groups and public health experts sent an urgent message to WHO Member States to tackle high medicines prices and support a proposed World Health Assembly (WHA) [resolution](#) to improve price transparency.

The event, *‘No Fair Price without Transparency’*, was held against the backdrop of high prices of medicines that have become a global challenge, affecting governments and patients alike. The organisers, while welcoming WHO initiatives to address the problem, pointed out that there is no consensus around the definition of “fair price”. However, it is essential to include here greater transparency of research and development (R&D) costs, price-setting decisions and the degree of public investment in private biomedical innovation.

Jaume Vidal of Health Action International, one of the organisers, stressed:

“Transparency is not only a matter of fairness, but also a factor for better governance of pharmaceutical markets. It is also at the core of the resolution proposed by Italy and seconded by a number of countries in the run up to the WHA. Member States have a chance to make a difference by showing support for the resolution, and must not waste it.”

Speaking at the event, Dr Mariângela Simão, WHO Assistant Director-General for Prequalification and Technology Assessment, noted that although the promotion of transparency is already contained in several WHO resolutions, the fact that a high-income country is now also pushing for it makes it particularly timely.

Today’s event was a contribution to the ongoing discussion around access to pharmaceutical products and high prices. This is a dialogue to which the 2nd Fair Pricing Forum as a whole can contribute in substantive, lasting way. Host, South Africa, can be again be an example and marker for Global Health and access to medicines.

James Love, Director of Knowledge Ecology International, added:

"For every significant reform of incentives, pricing or access, transparency and reliable data is important. The current asymmetry in knowledge of R&D costs, sales, pricing, know-how and access does not serve patients, taxpayers or employers. Transparency is a public good and a challenge that benefits from collective action."

Notes for Editors

- 'No Fair Price without Transparency' was organised by:
 - Cancer Alliance, South Africa
 - Health Action International
 - Knowledge Ecology International
 - Medicines Sans Frontiers Access Campaign
 - Oxfam
 - Public Citizen
 - Public Eye

- Speakers included:
 - Dr Suerie Moon (Chair), Director of Research, Global Health Centre, Graduate Institute of Geneva
 - Dr Mariângela Simão, Assistant Director-General, Prequalification and Technology Assessment, World Health Organization
 - Dr Luca Li Bassi, Director-General of the Italian Medicines Agency (AIFA)
 - Professor Fatima Suleman, School of Health Sciences, University of KwaZulu Natal
 - Mr James Love, Director, Knowledge Ecology International
 - Mr Tebo Shai, Patient advocate, Cancer Alliance

- The 2nd Fair Pricing Forum is hosted in Johannesburg by the WHO and Government of South Africa, and runs from 11–13 April 2019

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