Statement to EB146 on Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property

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HAI made the following statement to the 146th session of the WHO Executive Board, in which we addressed the progress of the Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property.

Thank you Chair,

Stichting Health Action International has been following the Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property since its inception.

We remain convinced that the World Health Organisation (WHO) has a central role to play in addressing the shortcomings of the current Research and Development (R&D) model by endorsing a renewed balance in research that serves global public health, and by promoting greater transparency on R&D costs, medicine prices and any other information relevant to improving access to medicines.

We commend WHO for joining cOAlition S and for its contribution to greater access to publicly funded knowledge. We follow with interest the multi-agency initiative to promote local production of medicines and health technologies; we hope that support intellectual property for related policies within pharmaceutical manufacturing development can be replicated and scaled up.

We welcome action proposed by the Government of Brazil and encourage other Member States to follow up on WHO’s implementation of the prioritised recommendations of the Expert Panel.

At a time when some Member States are under pressure for considering making legitimate use of their sovereign rights in the protection and promotion of public health, it is worth reiterating once more that intellectual property rights do not, should not and must not prevent Member States from taking measures to protect public health.