

# CAN-EU trade agreements create new barriers to access to medicines

9 April 2009



## Peru

**The price of medicines will increase by up to 26% due to the extension of patents**

## Colombia

**Data exclusivity would increase the annual medicines spending to 217 million dollars**

These are some of the stark preliminary findings of impact studies that are currently being conducted in Peru and Colombia. The studies are measuring the impact of the European Union's intellectual property (IP) proposals on access to medicines in these two Andean Community (CAN) countries. The preliminary results were released during the latest round of negotiations for the CAN-EU trade agreements that took place at the end of March in Lima. The full results are expected in May this year.

The trade agreements under negotiation between the EU and Colombia, Ecuador and Peru pose a serious threat to public health due to European proposals that include extending patents, extending the protection of trial data from 5 to 11 years and, establishing enforcement measures that further deter the trade in generic medicines. Generics cost between 4 and 35 times less than originator brand medicines.

The impact studies are based on the WHO (World Health Organization) and PAHO (Pan American Health Organization) methodology: *The Guide to estimate the impact on access to medicines due to changes in intellectual property rights*. The preliminary findings on the EU 'Extension of patents' proposals forecast a dramatic increase in medicines' spending in Peru due to a lack of generic competition, resulting in an increase in spending of 250 million dollars.

In addition, the extension of protection of trial data (data exclusivity) from 5 to 11 years would trigger an increase in medicines' spending of 217 million dollars in Colombia and 136 million dollars in Peru by 2025. As ever, the main victims of the rising cost of healthcare are the poorest families and those without healthcare insurance.

Roberto López, from the CAN-EU Alliance reacted strongly to the results stating that, "it is unacceptable that measures that were rejected in negotiations with the United States could even be considered now by national negotiators in dialogues with the EU. These measures would favour the multinational pharmaceutical industry, which takes advantage of all scenarios to strengthen the monopoly on medicines and to continue charging exorbitant prices for as long as possible."

Sophie Bloemen from Health Action International (Europe) added, "it is incredible that the negotiators from the European Commission could continue to ignore the facts about how their IP proposals will harm public health in developing and transitional countries."

PRESS RELEASE

Overtoom 60/II  
1054 HK Amsterdam  
The Netherlands  
Tel: +31 20 683 3684  
Fax: +31 20 685 5002  
Email: [info@haiweb.org](mailto:info@haiweb.org)  
[www.haiweb.org](http://www.haiweb.org)