

# Why isn't the world's public health body – WHO – a proposed stakeholder in the development of the R&D treaty?

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Geneva- The United States and the European Union are again impeding multilateralism on the Essential Health and Biomedical Research & Development (R&D) Treaty at the World Health Assembly (WHA) this week. Such a Treaty has the potential to make a groundbreaking contribution to sustainable R&D for innovative medicines to meet real health needs in developing countries.

The Treaty would establish global norms for R&D on many crucial issues: sustainable financing mechanisms; measures to encourage new incentive schemes; transparency and engagement rules; enhancement of local production capacity and technology transfer to developing countries.

Health Action International is very concerned with the absence of WHO as a stakeholder in the development of a R&D Treaty. The commitment to the R&D Treaty is one of the most promising outcomes of the two year negotiation process of the Intergovernmental Working Group on Public Health Innovation and Intellectual Property. The importance of the role of WHO as a stakeholder cannot be underestimated in ensuring the success and legitimacy of a global R&D Treaty that will make a major contribution to public health. It is unacceptable that the WHO, which has the mandate to address global health issues, should not be allowed in.

The positions of the US and EU indicate their reluctance in taking the treaty forward in a successful way. We strongly urge the delegations from the US and EU to reconsider this approach and take account of the potential of their actions to setback the establishment of more equitable health for patients in low-income countries.

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PRESS RELEASE

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