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## **At the 59th World Health Assembly, governments rise to the occasion and work together for health**

Health Action International (HAI) applauds the decision of the World Health Assembly (WHA) to pass a resolution which calls on governments to act to boost innovative research and development (R&D) of medicines. The passing of this resolution indicates that governments recognize the crisis in R&D and the failure of current systems to effectively address health needs in developing countries. The resolution builds on the findings of the Commission on Intellectual Property Rights, Innovation and Public Health (CIPIH) report and acknowledges the need for immediate action.

The resolution calls on the WHO to "establish an intergovernmental working group to develop a global strategy and plan of action to provide a framework based on the recommendations of the CIPIH report. The global strategy and plan of action will in particular address ways to secure an enhanced and sustainable basis for needs-driven, essential health R&D relevant to diseases that disproportionately affect developing countries".

Health Action International (HAI) is confident that the Director General will act in line with the urgency of the mandate given by member states to constitute the intergovernmental working group.

HAI, an NGO active in the Commission's consultations and member of Consumers International looks forward to making a positive contribution to ameliorating the crisis in R&D.

"This is an historic opportunity for all actors in global public health to respond to the call of the member states to do something meaningful and lasting to improve global public health. The magnitude of the crisis demands that we work with each other in a constructive and forward thinking fashion. We know we can rise to this challenge," says Colleen Daniels, coordinator of the HAI Essential Innovations project.

"This week the WHA has tackled a contentious issue with more grace and better outcomes than many had predicted. The decision to create a new working group that will include a mandate to address the setting of essential health R&D priorities and sustainable funding mechanisms is very important. R&D is too important to be left up to one person (Bill Gates), one country (US NIH/CDC) or private investors alone. It is also the beginning of a serious discussion of how we can reconcile incentives to innovate with access. Now we need to focus on the working group," said James Love, Director of the Consumer Project on Technology.

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Health Action International (HAI) is an independent, global network of over 200 consumer, health, development and other public interest groups involved in health and pharmaceutical issues in 70 countries worldwide. HAI works to increase access to essential medicines and improve their rational use. HAI actively promotes a more rational use of drugs and believes that all drugs marketed should meet real medical needs, have therapeutic advantages, be acceptably safe and offer value for money.