

**Statement to the 136th Session of the WHO Executive Board
on agenda item 10.4 Follow up of the Report of the Consultative Expert Working Group for
Research and Development: Financing and Coordination.**

Thank you, Chair, for giving me the opportunity of addressing the distinguished Members of the WHO Executive Board on behalf of Medicus Mundi International and the People's Health Movement.

We welcome the commitment by WHO and Member States to improve the financing and coordination of health research and development, in particular for those health needs disproportionately affecting LMICs.

In order to advance concrete mechanisms that address real research needs based on public health priorities, we urge member states to establish a pooled R&D fund that is based on **mandatory** contributions to ensure sustainability.

In addition, we call on member states to return to the original purpose of the demonstration projects, namely to create and demonstrate innovative funding mechanisms based on the principle of delinking the price of research from the cost of much needed health products.

The purposes of the CEWG initiative should be widened to include the development of new antibiotic drugs, better low cost diagnostics, basic research in areas of particular interest to all member states, and the funding of independent clinical trials to reduce significantly the cost of new drug development.

We also note that in the context of access, there is a need to confront more directly the barriers to access to treatment which arise from trade agreements. Proceeding with the new system being envisaged should not preclude WHO taking a more active stand in relation to the full use of TRIPS flexibilities and a moratorium on trade agreements which raise new barriers to affordability.

Finally, we note that WHA66.22 requested the Secretariat to convene another open-ended meeting of Member States prior to the Sixty-ninth World Health Assembly in May 2016, in order to assess progress and continue discussions on the remaining issues in relation to monitoring, coordination and financing for health research and development. We urge member states to convene this open ended working group as soon as possible. Finally, we urge MSs to ensure that the original purpose of the CEWG process, to facilitate the development of and access to needed medical products, does not remain buried amidst procedures and projects.

Thank you.

The statement will be delivered by Belinda Townsend