

# WHO Watch

WHO Watch is a project of the People's Health Movement, a global network of civil society groups held together by the vision of Health for All

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WHO Watch is a resource for advocacy, a platform for mobilisation and a people's intervention in global health governance.

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## **Statement of CMC Churches Action for Health including the People's Health Movement to the 65<sup>th</sup> WHA Agenda item 13.13: Substandard/spurious/false-labelled/falsified/ counterfeit medical products**

Mr Chairman

My name is Heba Wanis and I am making this statement on behalf of CMC Churches Action for Health, PHM and the TWN.

First, we welcome the establishment of a MS mechanism to address the issue of QSE of medical products, from a public health perspective, excluding trade and IP considerations.

We believe that this intergovernmental mechanism is the appropriate forum for WHO to deal with the problem of compromised medicines. With the establishment of this mechanism, it is time to dissociate WHO from IMPACT.

Second, the WHO has to focus on ensuring the quality and safety of medicines and ensuring they are affordable.

The public has a right to expect that the medicines are available and affordable and that medicines on offer are of high quality, are safe and are efficacious. One of the root causes of the problem of compromised medicines is the unaffordability of quality medicines.

This issue has not been given sufficient attention and we urge the Member States, through the proposed new mechanism, to agree to bold solutions to deal with the unaffordability of medicines.

Third, the effective regulation of quality, safety and efficacy depends on adequately resourced and well-functioning drug regulatory agencies at country level. An important study conducted by WHO on drug regulatory systems in 26 African countries concluded that many countries did not have the capacity to control the quality of medicines circulating in their markets.

The WHO has a critical mandate to support the development of drug regulatory capacity. This needs to be done urgently.

WHO needs to make a clear distinction between the regulation of quality, safety and efficacy on the one hand and the inspection and policing of claimed intellectual property rights. Conflating these two purposes serves the interests of big pharma but it does not assist in the establishment of effective drug regulation to protect consumers from compromised medicines.

We urge MS to properly fund WHO so it can carry out its proper role including building drug regulatory capacity at global, regional and country levels. We urge MS to resolve the financial crisis of WHO by increasing assessed contributions and converting tied donor funding to untied donations.

Thank you.