

**Statement by Medicus Mundi International
to the 130th Session of the Executive Board
on Agenda Item 6.12, Draft Global Vaccine Action Plan: update**



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

We appreciate the progress in the development of the global vaccine action plan and the international efforts to promote the right to immunization.

However we would like to raise some critical points.

We are concerned about the limited role WHO will play in setting immunization policies. Indeed, the organization is just a single actor in the Decade of Vaccine Collaboration, a public-private-partnership which is currently developing the action plan and includes the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, UNICEF, GAVI Alliance, among others. This situation might prevent the Organization from fully playing its leading role in global public health and independently guiding the establishment of fair and effective vaccine policies.

We also note with concern the proposal of establishing a "*vaccine access forum*" to improve communication among countries, public sector organizations and vaccine manufacturers. We urge Member States to carefully consider how conflicts of interest will be tackled since this forum will include stakeholders with commercial mindsets that might rival public health goals.

Missing from the document was any reference to evidence and data on the impact that the introduction of new antigens has on reducing the mortality and decreasing the incidence of vaccine-preventable diseases. The introduction of new vaccines should be subject to detailed needs assessment studies, cost-benefit analysis and health impact assessment taking into account the specific circumstances of each country. Moreover, immunization programmes should not be seen as a substitute to the broader range of public health measures, such as access to primary health care services, health education and the availability of safe drinking water and sanitation.

Finally, we call upon Member States to ensure that WHO works towards ensuring access to affordable vaccines in a sustainable manner by facilitating local production at regional or country level depending on the economies-of-scale and technology transfer.

Thank you.