

## Statement to the 136th Session of the WHO Executive Board on agenda item 10.5 Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property

Thank you Chair. I take the floor on behalf of MMI, Health Innovation in Practice, TWN and PHM.

The Global Strategy on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property is the harvest of a fascinating, painstaking, negotiation process, carried out for years in the name of “*the Spirit of Geneva*”. For those who made it happen, it can be recalled as a landmark chapter in the history of WHO. The strategy was a pioneering attempt by a UN agency to undo a global governance mistake of the ‘90s, by reclaiming the terrain from the trade agenda and give it back to the ‘human rights’ agenda. The right to health, in this case. The Ebola outbreak makes a striking case, 7 years down the line, on how relevant, indeed indispensable, the GSPoA is for global health.

Frankly, the implementation of this strategy is anything but a success story. Hardly any efforts were made to develop country ownership. Global implementation depends on poor funding from a few donor countries, with a piecemeal approach. Lack of financial support was repeatedly highlighted as the reason for inaction. This *cannot be* an excuse. Given the strategy’s importance, WHO should have funded it as a substantive activity through its core budget. For example, the GSPoA should have driven WHO’s efforts in fighting NTDs, instead of MDA programmes taking over through drug donations, an approach that both the CIPIH and the GSPoA contest.

We welcome the proposed extension. But to inform the next phase of implementation, the extension must be tied to a thorough qualitative/quantitative evaluation of the work done at all levels.

The evaluation is not an exercise for a management consultancy agency. A reliable evaluation demands experts in the field who can read the intricacies of the matter, including the political ones.

GSPoA deserves a better future.

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