

**Statement by Medicus Mundi International
to the 67th session of the World Health Assembly
on agenda item 12.3 'Hepatitis'
delivered by Mostafa El Yamani**

Thank you, Chair, for giving me the opportunity to address the distinguished members of the World Health Assembly on behalf of Medicus Mundi International and the People's Health Movement.

We welcome the draft resolution ([EB134.R18](#)) which is comprehensive and refers to all the key issues discussed during the last EB meeting.

New medicines are now available for the treatment of hepatitis C, and they have the potential to radically change the landscape of the battle against hepatitis C. Unfortunately, such treatments are not available to an overwhelming majority of patients, especially those living in LMICs, because of IP barriers and prohibitive costs of the new medicines.

We wish to emphasize the importance of national legislations that ensures the optimal and unhindered use of the flexibilities contained in the TRIPs agreement to secure access to the new generation of treatment available to treat hepatitis C infection.

We stress the reference in the draft resolution to coordinated multi-sectoral responses for prevention, detection, diagnosis, and treatment of people infected with viral hepatitis. This should include measures to reduce the on-going transmission resulting from medical or dental procedures.

The WHO should provide technical assistance to all member states that require such assistance to scale up the range of measures required for surveillance, prevention and treatment of hepatitis. The WHO should also provide assistance to LMICs to suitably amend their IP legislations, wherever necessary, to facilitate access to the new generation of drugs available for treatment of hepatitis C.

Although we welcome the recommendations to establish harm reduction policies using WHO standards, we believe that it would be unnecessary to include such direct and detailed references if it will delay the adoption of the resolution.

We urge that the needs of the millions of patients suffering from Hepatitis C be considered while finalising the resolution and at no cost should their interests be compromised.

Thank you.