



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

NOTE FOR THE PRESS



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**Note for the Media WHO/27
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WHO ESTABLISHES SECRETARIAT ON PUBLIC HEALTH, INNOVATION, ESSENTIAL HEALTH RESEARCH AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The World Health Organization (WHO) has established a secretariat on Public Health, Innovation, Essential Health Research and Intellectual Property. The secretariat will convene and facilitate an intergovernmental working group requested by WHO Member States in a resolution at the World Health Assembly in May, 2006.

The intergovernmental working group, open to all Member States, will develop a global strategy and plan of action including to provide a framework to enhance research and development into diseases that disproportionately affect developing countries.

The secretariat is currently holding consultations with stakeholders and will convene the first meeting of the intergovernmental working group in early December.

The overall effort will be led by Dr Howard Zucker, who becomes Representative of the Director-General on Intellectual Property, Innovation and Public Health, while remaining Assistant Director-General for Health Technology and Pharmaceuticals at WHO.

Dr Zucker will be supported by an in-house steering committee made up of senior WHO officials from headquarters and regional offices as well as a permanent secretariat. The secretariat will be headed by an Executive Secretary, Dr Eliil Renganathan - previously Director of the WHO Mediterranean Centre for Vulnerability Reduction in Tunis.

The intergovernmental working group and secretariat are being established to facilitate implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Commission on Intellectual Property Rights, Innovation and Public Health, presented to WHO Member States earlier this year.

Resolution on Public health, innovation, essential health research and intellectual property rights: towards a global strategy and plan of action:

http://www.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA59/A59_R24-en.pdf.

Commission on Intellectual Property Rights, Innovation and Public Health:

<http://www.who.int/intellectualproperty/documents/thereport/en/index.html>.

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