

IGBA Statement at 66th Series of Meetings of the WIPO Assemblies Opening Session

Healthy competition depends on clear and fair rules. These ensure that after a defined period of patent protection for innovative drugs, competition can enter the market, expanding access to cost-effective, life-saving treatments.

But when these conditions are altered or misused through tactics that delay competition, the system is disrupted. Innovation is slowed, access is limited, and healthcare systems bear the burden.

Unfortunately, the alteration of these conditions is becoming more common. Poor patent quality and inappropriate granting procedures allow non-innovative patents to grant protections where they are not due.

To this is added the abuse of dominant position by certain market participants. These, among other practices, create artificial hurdles that hinder competition, appropriate functioning of healthcare systems, and, ultimately, patients' access to life-saving medicines.

The IGBA urgently calls for global collaboration among stakeholders to protect the balance between innovation and access to medicines. A thriving off-patent sector is not a threat to innovation — it is essential to its continuation and sustainability.