

## **South Centre Calls on the WTO TRIPS Council to Support Access to Medicines and Technological Advancement for the Least Developed Countries**

The South Centre fully supports the Least Developed Countries' (LDC) request for an extension of the transition period granted to LDCs under Article 66.1 of the World Trade Organization's Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) in respect of pharmaceutical products for as long as a WTO member remains an LDC, and the waiver from obligations under Articles 70.8 and 70.9 of the TRIPS Agreement.

The South Centre calls upon all WTO members to fully support the duly motivated request of LDC members at the TRIPS Council session on 14-15 October 2015.

Access to medicines is fundamental element of the right to health. The extension of this transition period and grant of waivers from obligations under Articles 70.8 and 70.9 of the TRIPS Agreement is necessary to allow generic medicines to be imported and produced locally in LDCs without being constrained by patent monopolies. This will provide long-term legal certainty to enable producers of generics and international programs to supply affordable medicines to enable LDCs to meet the public health challenge of the burden of communicable and non-communicable diseases that continue to afflict and impoverish LDCs. It will also allow LDCs the necessary policy space to build manufacturing capacity in the pharmaceutical sector.