



DEVELOPMENT, INNOVATION AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY PROGRAMME (DIIP)

Monthly Update

March 2017

HIGHLIGHTS

- **The United Nations Secretary-General's High Level Panel on Access to Medicines: Opportunities to Advance Health Technology Innovation and Access.** Side event to the WTO TRIPS Council, organized by the South Centre with Bangladesh, Brazil, India, South Africa and the Secretariat of the UN Secretary-General's High Level Panel on Access to Medicines, held on 1 March 2017 at the WTO Headquarters in Geneva.



The panel included Ms. Ruth Dreifuss, Co-chair of the High Level Panel on Access to Medicines and Former President of Switzerland; Mr. Celso Amorim, Chairman of the UNITAID Board, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Brazil and member of the High Level Panel; H.E. Mr. Evandro Didonet, Ambassador of Brazil to the WTO; H.E. Mr. Shameem Ahsan, Ambassador of Bangladesh to the UN in Geneva; Prof. Carlos Correa, Special Advisor on Trade and Intellectual Property, South Centre; and Dr. Suerie Moon, Director of Research, Global Health Centre and Visiting Lecturer of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva.

A report of the event is available from the *SouthNews* article in this link: <https://www.southcentre.int/sc-side-event-un-sg-high-level-panel-on-access-to-medicines-1-march-2017/>.

- **Human Rights Council Panel Discussion on Access to Medicines.** The UN Human Rights Council on 8 March 2017 held a panel discussion to review the key challenges to

ensuring access to medicines as well as exchange views on good practices, including exploring the recommendations of the UN Secretary-General's High Level Panel on Access to Medicines. Prof. Carlos Correa participated in the panel.

Prof. Correa highlighted the High Level Panel report recommendation that governments engaged in bilateral and regional trade and investment treaties should ensure that these agreements do not include provisions that interfere with their obligations to fulfil the right to health and should undertake public health impact assessments. He proposed that the Human Rights Council starts work to develop methodologies and guidelines for impact assessment studies of this kind. He noted that impact assessment must be done ex ante and ex post and needs to consider the current effects of intellectual property standards.

For more, see [South News, No. 144, 16 March 2017](#).

PUBLICATIONS

Analytical Notes

- *The TRIPS and WTO Negotiations: Stakes for Africa*. South Centre and the African Trade Policy Centre (ATPC) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). Analytical Note, March 2017. Available from <https://www.southcentre.int/analytical-note-march-2017/>.

Background Notes

- Background Note to the 37th Session of the WIPO Standing Committee on the Law of Trademarks, Industrial Designs and Geographical Indications (SCT), held March 27 to March 30, 2017.

SouthNews Article

- Mirza Alas Portillo and Viviana Muñoz Tellez, **South Centre Side Event to the WTO TRIPS Council highlights recommendations by the UN Secretary General's High Level Panel on Access to Medicines**. *SouthNews*, 15 March 2017.

South Bulletin Article

- Germán Velásquez, **Challenges and Opportunities for the Next WHO Director-General**. *South Bulletin*, Issue 98, 17 March 2017. Available from <https://www.southcentre.int/south-bulletin-98-17-march-2017/>.

EVENTS/MEETINGS

- 23 March, Working Lunch Meeting at the South Centre for the *37th session of the WIPO Standing Committee on the Law of Trademarks, Industrial Designs and Geographical Indications (SCT)*, held from 27-30 March at WIPO Headquarters in Geneva.

PARTICIPATION IN EXTERNAL EVENTS

- 1-3 March, *Technical Meeting of the Andean Commission of Medicines* held in Lima, Peru. Dr. Germán Velásquez participated and gave 3 lectures on Access to medicines and intellectual property; Access to treatments for the hepatitis C virus; and Possibilities of a sub-regional use of TRIPS flexibilities.
- 6-7 March, Turin University's Master of Laws in International Trade Law: *International Developments in IP and Investment Law, including TRIPS Flexibilities and the definition of 'Investment' under BITs*. Prof. Carlos Correa participated.
- 12 March, *Meeting with the Colombian Minister of Health Alejandro Gaviria* in Bogota, Colombia. Dr. Germán Velásquez participated.
- 13-17 March, *Sixth meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group to Enhance the Functioning of the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing (OWG-EFMLS-6)*. The meeting considered a revised SMTA and options to increase benefit sharing in the context of the ITPGRFA. Proposals to expand the coverage of the Multilateral System were also discussed. Prof. Carlos Correa participated.
- 14 March, *Access to Medicines and Intellectual Property: from TRIPS - WTO - to the United Nations SG Panel*, organized by The Medicines, Information and Power Center of the National University of Colombia. Dr. Germán Velásquez participated.
- 15 March, *The Social Role of Intellectual Property*, organized by the Faculty of Law and Political Science of the National University of Colombia. Dr. Germán Velásquez participated.
- 15 March, *The technological, institutional and legal landscapes of genomic information: research directions for the International Treaty* organized by the Treaty Secretariat and the Center of Science, Policy and Environmental Studies at Arizona State University, which addressed the issue of “dematerialization” of genetic resources and its implication for access and benefit sharing under the ITPGRFA. Prof. Carlos Correa participated.
- 15-17 March, *Conference on the TRIPS-CBD Linkage: Issues and Way Forward*, organized by the Centre for WTO Studies at the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade and held in New Delhi, India. Mr. Nirmalya Syam participated.
- 20 March, *Strengthening the Impact of Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) Interventions*, organized by Coalition Plus, WHO and UNITAID in Geneva. This meeting was purposed to foster synergies between existing HCV programmes on service delivery, diagnostics and treatment. Dr. Germán Velásquez participated.
- 23-24 March, *First Meeting of the Expert Review Panel for the overall Programme Review of Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property* at WHO Headquarters in Geneva. The panel agreed on a work program to release its report next October. Prof. Carlos Correa participated.
- 27 March, *Open Session of the WHO Expert Committee on Selection and Use of Essential Medicines*, held in Geneva. Dr. Germán Velásquez participated.

- 28 March, *Panel Discussion on Intellectual Property and Climate Change* as part of the WIPO-WTO advanced course for government officials, held at WHO in Geneva. Participants were from developing countries and transition economies, from IP offices and foreign and trade ministries. Dr. Viviana Muñoz participated and gave a presentation on how patents can become barriers to development, access and diffusion of Clean Energy Technologies (CETs) and why patents are an imperfect proxy for innovation.

www.southcentre.int