



PHARMACEUTICALS EXPORT PROMOTION COUNCIL

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Indian proposal on counterfeit issue gets support of World Health Assembly

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Joseph Alexander, New Delhi

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<http://www.pharmabiz.com/article/detnews.asp?articleid=55624§ionid=>

As proposed by the South-East Asian countries led by India, the World Health Organisation (WHO) is to form an inter-governmental working group of the members, instead of engaging outside agencies for the task, to look into the counterfeit issue and also the role of International Medical Products Anti-Counterfeiting Taskforce (IMPACT).

Countries led by India thus has managed to once again thwart the attempts by the developed world to entrust IMPACT to find the solution on the issue with the just-concluded World Health Assembly resolving that the WHO would be controlled by the member States on the issue, as proposed by India.

Representing the South-East Asian nations, India had proposed a draft resolution on the topic of counterfeit which had raised lots of heat in the run-up to the health assembly. "World Health Assembly decides to establish an open-ended inter-governmental working group comprising Member States; Requests the Director General to facilitate the work of the inter-governmental working Group," according to the Indian proposal.

"It decides that the working group will examine the following issues: (i) measures to ensure access to quality, safe, efficacious and affordable medical products; (ii) relationship between WHO and IMPACT; (iii) prevention and control of medical products of compromised quality, safety and efficacy such as sub-standard, spurious, falsely-labelled, falsified, counterfeit medical products from a public health perspective, excluding trade and intellectual property considerations," as per the draft.

After heated discussions, the assembly also ended up with a similar resolution. "A working group on counterfeit medical products proposed, and the Health Assembly accepted, that WHO convened an intergovernmental working group, participation in which is to be open to all Member States. This group will examine WHO's role in ensuring availability of good-quality, safe, efficacious and affordable medicines, its relationship with IMPACT, and its role in prevention and control of substandard/spurious/falsely-labelled/falsified/counterfeit medical products," according to the official resolution passed.

The proposal emphasized that the group should restrict itself to public health issues only. Intellectual property or trade issues will not form part of its remit. The working group will make specific recommendations to the 64th World Health Assembly, in 2011, the assembly felt.