

MSD-Merck response re alleged advocacy campaign by Innovative Pharmaceutical Association of South Africa (IPASA) opposing South Africa's efforts to introduce intellectual property reforms aimed at increasing access to essential medicine:

19 February 2014

Business & Human Rights Resource Centre invited MSD-Merck to respond to the following items:

- "South African pharma firms accused of delaying patents law reforms", Guardian [UK], 17 January 2014
<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jan/17/south-african-pharma-accused-delay-patents-law-reform>
- "New leaked Merck missive reveals deep drug, medical device company opposition to South African patent reforms", KEI, 20 January 2014
<http://keionline.org/node/1908>
- "'Genocidal' drug patent plot angers doctors, rights groups"
<http://www.timeslive.co.za/politics/2014/01/17/genocidal-drug-patent-plot-outrages-doctors-rights-groups>
- "Leaked pharmagate emails prove big pharma involvement in scandal"
<http://www.tac.org.za/news/leaked-pharmagate-emails-prove-big-pharma-involvement-scandal>
- "TAC, Section27 and MSF react to Pharmagate"
<http://www.fixthepatentlaws.org/?p=823>

Comment to Business & Human Rights Resource Centre by MSD-Merck re alleged advocacy campaign by Innovative Pharmaceutical Association of South Africa (IPASA) to oppose South Africa's efforts to introduce intellectual property reforms aimed at increasing access to essential medicine:

MSD, known as Merck & Co., Inc. in the United States and Canada, supports the decision communicated recently by the Innovative Pharmaceutical Association of South Africa (IPASA) to reject the proposal by a US based consultancy firm (which has not been retained for any services). As a member of IPASA, MSD was involved in the screening of agencies and the consideration of a proposal.

MSD has long supported South Africa and continues to collaborate on ways to increase access to our medicines and vaccines for those who need them. Overall, MSD believes in the vital importance of a national discussion on the IP policy for the future of the Life Sciences sector and other innovative industries in South Africa; with the ultimate goal of providing high quality innovative medicines that address unmet medical needs, whilst also contributing to the economy.

We share the aspiration of all South Africans that they should have access to cutting-edge medicine without delay, and that access to excellent medical care and promising new medicines should be broad and immediate. We are committed to partnering with stakeholders in the health community to strengthen and improve healthcare delivery and access.