

I'm speaking on behalf of the Working Group on Intellectual Property (GTPI), a collective of Brazilian organizations, including Conectas, dedicated to increase access to essential medicines. At this important date we emphasize how inspired we are by all the women from the access to medicines movement, especially two of them: Mara Moreira, an HIV/Aids activist from Brazil and Tobeka Daki, a cancer activist from South Africa. Both of them left us last year because access to life-saving drugs was denied or delayed to them due to high drug prices.

In Latin America, because abusive drug prices eroding our countries' budget, the HIV/Aids mortality rates soar back to early times of the epidemic. The good practices in our region are threatened by the unethical use of the patent system resulting in a reduction of rights for the population and architecture of impunity for corporations.

The High Level Panel report contains essential recommendations to curb this unbalance that can be applied in the short term.

It stresses that countries should apply rigorous health-sensitive standards of invention and patentability to curtail the evergreening of patents. Many countries already have such standards, but they are being attacked by companies that rely on unmerited patents to charge high prices.

In Brazil, the participation of health authorities in the patent examination, to block evergreening, is being undermined as result of the multiple attacks made by pharmaceutical companies. We see this threat also in other countries. Attacks on the right to use flexibilities must be condemned and punished. That is why we need binding rules to hold corporations accountable for violations, especially human rights violations.

Finally, we would like to ask the panelists how the HLP recommendations could be used to support ongoing cases where the use of flexibilities is under attack, as is the case of ANVISA prior consent in Brazil.