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PATENT LAW AND PUBLIC HEALTH IN INDIA: A DELICATE BALANCING ACT

AUTHORED BY - MS. SHIVANI BAINSLA[1] & MS. AKSHI GUPTA[2]

Abstract

This study examines the intricate relationship between patent law and public health in India, concentrating on the legal tactics used to promote pharmaceutical invention while guaranteeing that a sizable and different population has access to nicely priced specifics. In order to ameliorate access to Medicinals, the study emphasizes the significance of Section 3 d), obligatory licensing, and the strong general drug assiduity. In order to understand how court interpretations impact patent law and public health goods, it also examines important case studies, most specially the Novartis v. Union of India case. According to the thesis, India's patent legislation aims to promote invention, but by skilfully exercising the flexibilities permitted by transnational trade agreements, it basically prioritizes the thing of guaranteeing that vital specifics stay available to underprivileged groups.

Keywords: Indian Patent Law, mandatory Licensing, Section 3(d) of the Patents Act, Generic Drug Industry, TRIPS Compliance preface The Problem of Patent Protection and the Right to Health

1. Introduction: The Right to Health and the Challenge of Patent Protection

Everyone agrees that having access to necessary specifics is a vital part of the right to health. This idea, which emphasizes the significance of guaranteeing that people have access to the medicines needed to save and enhance their well- being, is inscribed in a number of transnational agreements and public constitutions[3]. But the pharmaceutical sector, which is in charge of creating and manufacturing these life- saving drugs, operates within a complex profitable and legal ecosystem. Patent protection, which is a key part of this ecosystem, is very important for encouraging research and development (R&D) by giving formulators exclusive

[1] Assistant Professor ,Amity Law School, Noida
[2] Student, Amity Law School, Noida
[3] International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Article 12; General Comment No. 14 (2000) by the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

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rights for a set amount of time. India is a unique case study in dealing with this sensitive conflict because its population is growing, there are many different socioeconomic groups, and it has a history of both invention and depending on well-priced specifics. The country's legal system has changed a lot over the years. This is because the government is always trying to find a balance between encouraging drug companies to come up with new drugs by giving them patents and protecting public health by making sure that important information is still available and affordable for everyone.

The delicate balance that India aims to save will be covered in detail in this chapter. The Indian Patents Act of 1970 will be examined, together with its literal background and after changes brought about by the Trade- Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (passages) agreement[4].

The chapter will look at specific laws, like Section 3(d) and mandatory licensing, that are meant to put public health issues first. To understand how court decisions affect the real-world application of these rules and the lives of millions of people, it will also look at important case studies, like the big Novartis case. The goal is to show that you fully understand how India's patent law works in relation to its health care system and its role as a major global supplier of affordable goods.

2. The Indian Patents Act of 1970 A Base for Independence

In addition to being a piece of law, the Indian Patents Act of 1970 was a protestation of purpose that reflected a period of substantial policy reform motivated by a fidelity to independence and a deliberate attempt to break away from the moping goods of social profitable programs. Before this Act, India's patent system, which was mostly based on British social authority, heavily favoured foreign transnational companies. This made it hard for Indian companies to develop their own medicines and made it harder for most people to get cheap medicines. The Act was meant to encourage native invention and make sure that everyone, no matter their socioeconomic status, could get the medicines they needed.

Its main characteristics were purposefully created to support homegrown assiduity and give

[4] Chaudhuri, S. *The WTO and India's Pharmaceuticals Industry: Patent Protection, TRIPS, and Developing Countries* (OUP, 2005).

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public health conditions top precedence.

- The Standard for Handling Patents The Act's focus on giving out patents mostly for the process of making a drug instead of the drug itself may have been its most important part. This putatively little difference has significant ramifications[5]. It made it possible for Indian directors to produce and vend the same drug using colourful, unpatented styles. This encouraged directors to contend, which redounded in lower costs and more accessible specifics. also, it boosted domestic technology chops by encouraging Indian businesses to invest in creating indispensable product ways. [6]
- A Shorter Patent Period the Act firstly specified a shorter patent period than the transnational norms that were in use at the time. As a result, patent holders' time of exclusivity was docked, allowing general specifics to hit the request before and fostering price competition.
- Putting the National Interest First the Act made it clear that patents should be awarded in the public interest. This was further than just rhetoric; it was supported by vittles' for mandatory licensing, which permitted the government to permit the manufacture of patented specifics by other businesses if the patent holder failed to satisfy reasonable public demands or if the drug wasn't nicely priced. [7]
- Banning Agrarian Processes Given the significance of husbandry for the country's frugality and food security, horticultural and agrarian processes were expressly barred from patentability. This defended Indian interests' growers and encouraged invention in agrarian practices without the fear of patent violation.

The 1970 Act, which placed a strong emphasis on process patents and public health, was pivotal to the growth of the general drug sector in India. By using this strategy, Indian pharmaceutical companies were suitable to establish themselves as major actors in the global request and lower the cost of medicinal for people in both developed and developing nations.

3. TRIPS Compliance and Later Amendments: A Change in the Environment

India's patent system was fundamentally challenged by the World Trade Organization's (WTO) 1995 founding and the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)

[5] The Patents Act, 1970, Sections 2(1)(j) and 5 (prior to 2005 amendment)
[6] Dutfield, G. *Intellectual Property Rights and the Life Science Industries* (Ashgate, 2003).
[7] Section 83 of the Patents Act, 1970 (Objectives of the patent system)

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agreement that accompanied it. The tradition of process patents, which had been a pillar of Indian policy, was essentially eliminated when TRIPS, a broad international agreement on intellectual property rights, required member governments, including India, to give product patents for medicines. Longer patent durations were also mandated by TRIPS, bringing them into compliance with global norms.

India signed the WTO pact after realizing the necessity of integrating into the global economic system.[8] As a developing country, India was given a transition period to meet the TRIPS standards. This gave India time to change its own laws and rules to meet its international obligations. During this transition period, India had the chance to fully think about how TRIPS would affect its public health goals and to add protections to its patent laws to lessen any bad effects.

The Patents Act's changes in 1999, 2002, and 2005 to make the Indian patent system more in line with the TRIPS agreement had a big effect on the system. Pharmaceutical product patents gave the original patent holders a monopoly by making it illegal for anyone else to make their patented drugs without permission. This could raise costs and make it harder for patients to get the drugs they need.

In order to complicate the licensing process for generics and prolong market exclusivity, India additionally implemented data exclusivity clauses that grant originator businesses a term of exclusivity over clinical trial data. [9] Lastly, the changes made patent enforcement stronger, making it harder for generic companies to challenge patents and raising the penalties for breaking them.

These changes were needed to make sure that TRIPS was followed, but they worried public health advocates and generic drug makers about how they might affect access to cheap medicines. The Indian government was aware of these worries and tried to add some protections to the changed Patents Act to lessen the bad effects on public health and keep its ability to give its people cheap medicines. The hard part was finding a balance between following international rules and putting public health first.

[8] Balasubramaniam, K. "Pharmaceutical Patents and Access to Essential Drugs in Developing Countries", *Int'l Journal of Health Services* 33(1), 161–174 (2003).
[9] The Patents (Amendment) Act, 2005, which amended Sections 2, 3, and 5 of the 1970 Act.

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4. Chancing a Balance Between Access and Innovation Important Clauses and Mechanisms in the Modified Act

The Indian Patents Act still has important clauses intended to strike a careful balance between securing intellectual property rights and guaranteeing access to specifics, notwithstanding the substantial changes demanded to misbehave with passages. In the face of mounting demand to bolster patent protection, these measures are essential to conserving India's position as a leading supplier of nicely priced specifics both locally and internationally. They also show the nation's fidelity to guarding public health.

4.1 Section 3(d) Encouraging Real Innovation and precluding" Evergreening"

The Patents Act's Section 3(d) is really the most contentious and important clause guarding Indian cases' access to specifics. It's a purposeful attempt to stop" evergreening," a tactic used by medicinal pots to protract the patent life of formerly- approved specifics by making little changes and presenting them as new inventions. These changes can successfully extend the time of request exclusivity and stop general rivals from entering the request, but they constantly don't give cases with any perceptible remedial advantage.

A" new form of a known substance" isn't patentable unless it demonstrates" significantly enhanced efficacity" in comparison to the known substance, according to Section 3(d), which explicitly tackles this problem. The patentability of medicinal particulars in India has been significantly impacted by this putatively straightforward rule. Before a new interpretation of an old drug may be given patent protection, it's the responsibility of medicinal pots to show a genuine and significant increase in its remedial efficacity.

There has been important discussion and action about the meaning and perpetration of Section 3(d). Pharmaceutical enterprises contend that it's delicate to establish if a new interpretation of an honoured chemical satisfies this demand since the term" significantly enhanced efficacity" is nebulous and private. still, Indian courts have affirmed Section 3(d)'s legitimacy constantly and stressed that it should be read in a way that encourages true invention and prohibits the patenting of insignificant changes that do not actually help cases.

This clause has been pivotal in the patenting of small changes that do not give any significant remedial benefits, allowing general clones of necessary specifics to be vended when the original patent expires. Public health activists have hailed it as an essential instrument for guaranteeing access to nicely priced specifics, and it marks a deliberate choice to put public

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health ahead of medicinal pots' business interests. [10]

4.2 Compulsory Licensing: An Exigency Safety Medium for Public Health

Another important armament under the Patents Act is mandatory licensing, which can be used to handle circumstances in which a patented drug is either not being" worked" in India — that is, not being produced locally to fulfil the demands of the crowd — or is n't accessible to the public at a fair price.

The Act emphasizes the prudent use of obligatory permits to cover public health by outlining particular circumstances under which they may be given. The following are among the main conditions. [11]

- Failure to Meet Reasonable Public Conditions If the patented invention fails to sufficiently meet the major unmet public need for the drug, a forced license may be granted.
- Attainability or Unaffordability The patent holder's invention must be nicely priced; if not, a sizable portion of the public may be unfit to get it, challenging a obligatory license.
- Lack of Original Working An obligatory license may be granted if the patented invention isn't produced in India to a sufficient degree. By encouraging patent holders to set up indigenous manufacturing installations, this demand promotes profitable growth and guarantees a harmonious force of essential Medicinals.

The obligatory licensing regulations serve as a vital tool for government action to ensure that important specifics continue to be accessible to the general people. When patent holders are unfit give particulars at reasonable pricing, this intervention takes place[12]. likewise, the possibility of obligatory licensing provides a strong incitement for patent holders to negotiate with general drug directors and give licenses on fair terms, thus perfecting access to essential medicinal.

Bristol- Myers Squibb v. BDR Pharma the IPAB denied a mandatory license to BDR Pharma due to failure to metre-licensing conditions. The ruling stressed procedural rigor and due industriousness anticipated from general manufacturers before invoking mandatory licensing vittles''. [13]

[10] Section 3(d), Patents Act, 1970 (as amended)
[11] The Patents Act, 1970, Section 84 (Compulsory licences).
[12] Natco Pharma Ltd. v. Bayer Corporation, Compulsory Licensing Order (2012), Controller of Patents
[13] *Bristol-Myers Squibb v. BDR Pharma*, IPAB Order (Oct. 29, 2013).

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Lee Pharma v. AstraZeneca

AB Lee Pharma's operation for a mandatory license was rejected for inadequate evidence of public need and remedial advantage. The case illustrates that Indian law authorizations provable necessity and non-availability before granting similar licenses. [14]

4.3 Pre-Grant Opposition and Post-Grant cancellation precluding Inaccurate Patents

Strong procedures for querying patents before they're awarded (pre-grant opposition) and after they're granted (post-grant cancellation) are handed under the Patents Act. These clauses give interested parties similar as general drug directors, public health advocacy associations, and indeed private citizens — the capability to dispute the legality of patents they feel were inaptly awarded or don't serve the public interest. [15]

Pre-Grant Opposition is a process that allows any person or association to challenge a patent operation's blessing before the patent office makes a final decision. The thing of this procedure is to stop the issue of patents that do not meet conditions for patentability, similar artificial operation, invention, and imagination.

It also makes it possible to present evidence that an invention doesn't satisfy the conditions for patentability under material legislative laws, similar as Section 3(d) of the patent law.

Again, after a patent has been awarded, parties may apply to have it abandoned under post-Grant cancellation. This solicitation may be filed on a number of grounds, including lack of originality, imagination, or artificial applicability. likewise, if the patent was attained unlawfully or if it's allowed to be against the public interest, cancellation may be requested.

Both procedures serve as vital defences against illegal patent awards that do not cleave to accepted morals[16]. They encourage careful review of patent applications, guaranteeing that only really inventive ideas are granted patent protection. Furthermore, these processes empower generic drug manufacturers and public health advocates to engage actively in the patent system, thereby reinforcing its role in fostering innovation and enhancing public health, rather than allowing it to serve as a vehicle for monopolistic practices that could hinder access to vital medications.

Section 100 of the Patents Act grants the government the authority to utilize or permit the use of a patented invention for its own needs, particularly concerning public health issues, and this

[14] *Lee Pharma v. AstraZeneca AB*, Compulsory Licensing Application No. 1 of 2015 (2015), Controller of Patents. Summary discussed in: Prabhala, A. et al., "Patent Licensing and Public Interest in India," *South Centre Report*, 2016.

[15] The Patents Act, 1970, Section 25(1)

[16] The Patents Act, 1970, Section 25(2)

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can occur without the consent of the patent holder. This legal provision is crucial for facilitating access to patented medicines during national emergencies or public health crises, such as epidemics and pandemics. It empowers the government to directly procure medicines under patent protection or to authorize third parties to manufacture these essential drugs for public health initiatives. By enabling such actions, the government can circumvent the patent holder's monopoly, ensuring that necessary medications are available to the populace at more affordable prices. [17]Furthermore, this provision equips the government with the ability to negotiate with patent holders, seeking reasonable pricing and better terms of access for critical health resources.

5. Case Studies Analysing the goods of Court Rulings on Public Health and Patent Law

The Patents Act's interpretation and perpetration have been greatly told by a number of well-known patent battles in India, especially with regard to public health issues. analysing these cases offers important perceptivity into the factual operations of India's patent law and the bar's function in striking a balance between the publics and pharmaceutical pots' disagreeing interests.

5.1 The major ruling on Section 3(d) in Novartis v. Union of India

One of the most significant patent cases in Indian history is Novartis v. Union of India (2013). The issue centred on Novartis's trouble to patent the beta- crystalline interpretation of their popular cancer medicine, Gleevec (imatinib mesylate). Novartis argued that this new interpretation should admit a patent because it was more stable and bioavailable than the former form. still, the Indian Patent Office denied the operation, pertaining to Section 3(d) of the Patents Act. [18]They stated that the beta- crystalline interpretation did n't have" significantly enhanced efficacity" compared to the being form. In the action, Novartis claimed that Section 3(d) was invalid, as it unfairly targeted pharmaceutical discoveries and set a high standard for patents, which disaccorded with the passage's agreement. Eventually, the Supreme Court of India upheld the denial of Novartis's patent operation, making a corner ruling that corroborated Section 3(d) to cover against" evergreening" and insure access to affordable medicines. The

[17] The Patents Act, 1970, Section 100; WHO, Promoting Access to Medical Technologies and Innovation: Intersections between Public Health, IP and Trade, 2012.
[18] Novartis AG v. Union of India, (2013) 6 SCC 1; also see: Kapczynski, A. "Harmonization and Its Discontents," California Law Review, 2009.

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Court noted that by banning patents on minor changes that offered minimum benefits, Section 3(d) served the public interest and aligned with passages. This decision was eaten by public health lawyers and general medicine makers. It averted Novartis from extending its monopoly on Gleevec and promoted the vacuity of cheaper general rather for cases in India and other developing countries.

5.2 Bayer Corporation v. Union of India the First Mandatory License in India

This case involves Bayer Corporation 'Santi-cancer medicine Nexavar (sorafenib tosylate). At INR 280,000(around USD 4,000) per month, it was unaffordable for numerous Indian cases. The Indian general medicine company Natco Pharma sought a mandatory license to produce a general interpretation for a much lower price of INR 8,800(around USD 125) per month — a reduction of over 97. ultimately, the Indian Patent Office granted this mandatory license. Natco was needed to pay Bayer royalties on its deals. The Intellectual Property Appellate Board (IPAB) upheld the license, despite Bayer arguing that the decision was unjustified, noting Bayer's failure to meet the public's" reasonable conditions." [19]This case marked the first mandatory license granted in India under the revised Patents Act. It stressed the significance of mandatory licensing to ameliorate access to essential drugs. It also showed the Indian government's amenability to use this tool to attack issues of affordability and access in healthcare.

5.3 Roche v. Cipla Navigating the Landscape of Patent Enforcement

In this case, Cipla, a major Indian general medicine manufacturer, introduced a general interpretation of Roche's cancer medicine Tarceva (erlotinib) at a much lower price. Roche sued Cipla for patent violation and sought an instruction to stop the trade of the general product. The Delhi High Court originally issued an interim instruction to help Cipla from dealing general Tarceva. latterly, this order was lifted, allowing Cipla to continue deals during the ongoing case.

In India, where the bar frequently prioritizes public health and supports general competition to increase access to affordable specifics, the Roche v. Cipla case underlined the hurdles faced by innovative pharmaceutical companies in administering patents. Cipla responded to Roche's claim by asserting that Roche's patent was invalid and pressing the public interest in lowering

[19] *Natco Pharma Ltd. v. Bayer Corp.*, CL Order No. 1/2012; IPAB decision dated 4 March 2013. See also: Abbott, F. M., "Compulsory Licensing in India," UNDP Briefing, 2013

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the cost of general Tarceva. [20]

Eventually, the disagreement was resolved outside of court, enabling Cipla to keep dealing general Tarceva under certain conditions, including paying royalties to Roche. Cipla also queried the permission of patents grounded on minor inventions in another case, Cipla Ltd. v. Union of India, arguing that these didn't constitute true invention or profit the public. also, this action called for increased judicial oversight of the patent examination process, especially regarding its impact on public health, and revealed issues with translucency in the Indian patent office.

6. The part of the general medicine Assiduity in Promoting Access to Medicines in India and Beyond

The Indian general medicine business is essential to the provision of nicely priced specifics, which benefits not just the country's citizens but also numerous poor nations throughout the world. This sector has changed the healthcare geography by giving millions of people access to important treatments that they may not else be suitable to buy. It has a long history of manufacturing high- quality general clones of essential medicines at much cheaper costs than their original coequals. [21]

The following are some of the Indian general drug assiduity's major benefactions

- Lowering the Cost of Medicines The emergence of general competition has significantly reduced the cost of necessary medicinal, making them more affordable for people in developing countries like India. multitudinous lives may have been saved as a result of this price drop, and numerous people's health results have greatly bettered.
- adding Access to Medicines The assiduity has increased access to essential medicinal by furnishing nicely priced general druthers, especially in areas where healthcare installations are constantly limited. In order to address health injuries in developing requests, this increase in vacuity has been essential.
- Supporting Public Health Programs Major programs aimed at HIV/ AIDS, TB, malaria, and other contagious ails have reckoned heavily on the general drug assiduity in India.

[20] *F. Hoffmann-La Roche Ltd. v. Cipla Ltd.*, Delhi HC (2008) – Interim Order; later vacated in 2009. Analysis in: Sampat, B. N., "Generic Competition in India," *Health Affairs*, 2012.
[21] Chaudhuri, S. *TRIPS and Changes in Pharmaceutical Patent Regime in India: Impact on Access to Medicines*. UNDP, 2005.

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Also, by furnishing specifics for exigency backing, the sector has backed philanthropic enterprise. The Indian government has enforced regulations to support the expansion and sustainability of the general drug sector, admitting its vital part.

The government laboriously supports this assiduity as a pillar of its public health docket while upholding strict quality conditions to guarantee the efficacity and safety of general specifics. This each- encompassing strategy highlights the pivotal connection between the sector and public health results, pressing the necessity of ongoing backing and advancement.

7. Challenges and unborn Directions Navigating a Complex and Evolving Landscape

Indeed, while India has made great strides in striking a balance between patent law and public health, there are still a number of obstacles to overcome, and the situation is continually changing. Continued sweats to ameliorate the legislative frame, bolster nonsupervisory monitoring, and encourage invention while conserving access to specifics will be necessary to address these issues.

In order to protract drug patent lives without demonstrating perceptible increases in efficacity, medicinal pots are developing evergreening tactics. In order to guarantee that licit inventions are defended by patents, courts and patent services must uphold Section 3(d). Although not specifically commanded by passages, current data exclusivity clauses may defer general entry after a patent expires, raising the cost of specifics and dwindling availability. Developed nations are championing for" passages- plus" clauses in trade agreements, which would circumscribe poor countries' flexibilities and strengthen patent protection. [22]Innovative enterprises frequently use aggressive legal strategies to stymie general challengers, burdening lower businesses and maybe impacting public health by extending access to nicely priced medicines.

Incipiently, there's a critical need for nonsupervisory adjustment in India to alleviate obstacles in the blessing of general medicines, enabling faster request entry and making essential specifics more accessible to cases in need.

[22] Hemphill, C. S., & Sampat, B. N. “Evergreening in India,” *New England Journal of Medicine*, 2012.

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Several comprehensive reforms are necessary to guarantee that India's patent governance successfully serves both its resides and the global community.

First, in order to help" evergreening" ways and guarantee that only really inventive discoveries are granted patent protection, Section 3(d) enforcement has to be tensed. In order to ameliorate thickness and pungency in patent evaluations, it's necessary to clarify and ameliorate the norms for the perpetration of Section 3(d).

Alternate, given their goods on pharmaceutical access, a thorough-evaluation of data exclusivity clauses is essential. The Indian government should repel sweats to include" passages- plus" clauses in trade agreements that would limit poor countries' access to patent protections. likewise, encouraging nonsupervisory adjustment among countries will grease the licensing of general specifics, reduce entry walls and ameliorate access to medicinal. To reduce drug costs, the government must give precedence to the quick blessing of general rivals.

Likewise, it's essential to maintain support for the general drug sector and to make sure that these specifics meet strict quality conditions. To encourage invention in the general assiduity and enable the development of new and advanced medicinal, exploration and development expenditures should be made.

Incipiently, it's critical to raise public mindfulness of the significance of general specifics and their donation to fluently available healthcare. Promoting educated debates on patent law and public health will affect in policy choices that serve the public interest and ameliorate access to healthcare. [23]

8. Conclusion A Path Forward for Balancing Innovation and Access

India's commitment to striking a balance between invention and access to necessary specifics is instanced by its running of patent law and public health. Important protections like Section 3(d) and obligatory licensing measures that put public health first are included in the introductory Patents Act of 1970 and passages- aligned variations. Novartis v. Union of India is a pivotal case that shows the bar's interpretation of patent law prioritizing public health above patent extension, so avoiding" evergreening" and guaranteeing the force of nicely priced

[23] Dey, S. "Regulating India's Generic Industry," *The Lancet*, 2014.

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general specifics.

The provision of affordable specifics is a pivotal function of the Indian general medicine sector, which has a substantial influence on the security of world health. Despite significant advancements, problems still live.

To sustain a patent governance that successfully serves individualities and the global community, it's imperative to continue enforcing Section 3(d), rethink data exclusivity conditions, further encourage nonsupervisory adjustment, and help the general drug assiduity.

Although India's approach has generated contestation and review, it provides other developing countries looking to advance pharmaceutical invention while conserving the right to nicely priced specifics with a useful model. The ultimate ideal is still to ensure that everyone has a healthy future by encouraging invention and giving those who are most in need precedence access. In order to produce a sustainable and indifferent system that promotes both invention and access to necessary specifics, governments, pharmaceutical pots, general directors, and civil society must work together.