



**GE AFRICA**

The Courtyard, General Mathenge Drive  
P. O. Box 41608  
00100 NAIROBI

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T +254 20 421 5000

F +254 20 3748609

[www.ge.com](http://www.ge.com)

Ms Malebona Precious Matsoso  
Director General  
Ministry of Health  
Civitas Building  
Corner Andries and Struben Streets  
Pretoria  
001  
Republic of South Africa

Dear Director General,

As you may know, the World Health Organization is holding its ministerial-level World Health Assembly (WHA) in Geneva this week. We understand that pending before the WHA is a proposal by one of the member states to commence negotiations to create a global treaty on R&D.

As a leader in global innovation in the field of transformational health technology, GE is one of many innovator companies that believe that an R&D treaty will not be an effective instrument to bring about timely development of new medicines and technologies to combat disease in the developing world. In fact, many of the proposals relating to the R&D treaty concept will, in our view, adversely affect the current system of intellectual property (IP) protections and incentives for innovators and thus impede the development of badly needed new health products and technologies for developing countries. IP directly benefits developing countries now more than ever as products and technologies are being both developed for use and often engineered in developing countries via public-private partnerships.

From a practical standpoint, we are aware that the proposal being made to the WHA is very likely to be opposed by a wide variety of Member States that do not believe a multi-year R&D treaty negotiation is a viable way to improve health outcomes in the developing world. If this is the case, the likelihood of such a global legal instrument achieving the avowed goals is low—indeed it may delay the development of relationships and technologies that are crucial to the goal of making quality health care and treatment more available.

GE has a long tradition of working in South Africa in partnership with many stake holders to provide wide-reaching solutions in the field of health technology. We are very proud of our recent work in cardiology with the eThekweni Hospital and Heart Centre in Durban. We believe that cooperative arrangements such as these are a better route to improving healthcare access and outcomes in South Africa and other countries because they build on mutual understanding and shared goals that encompass the concerns of all stakeholders.



We very much hope that your representative to the WHO would work with other Member States to seek a constructive alternative to the proposed resolution at the WHA and that this would help advance the shared goal of expanding health care access and quality in Africa.

Sincerely,  
For GE Africa

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nils Tcheyan'.

**Nils Tcheyan**  
**Director, Government Affairs and Policy**