

The Chairman, Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Group of Manufacturers Association of Nigeria, (PMGMAN), Pharm. Okey Akpa (FPSN), has condemned the nonchalant attitude of some drug-producing companies towards products they classified as “Orphan drugs”

In his key note address at the Nigeria Pharma Manufacturers Expo 2015, Akpa lamented that a major challenge in Africa is that many International Pharmaceutical Companies are not interested in research and development investments for conditions such as sickle cell anaemia and malaria that are peculiar to the African continent.

The three-day programme was declared opened by the Director-General of the National Agency for Food, Drugs Administration and Control, NAFDAC, Dr. Paul Orhi in Ikeja, Lagos

Speaking on the theme ‘The Nigerian Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Industry & International Competitiveness’, Akpan lauded the milestone achieved by Nigeria which “is currently the biggest pharmaceutical manufacturing country in West Africa, accounting for more than 65% of local manufacture of medicines relevant to the people and diseases in the region such as anti-malaria medicines, anti-retroviral medicines (for HIV & AIDS), herbal medicines, and many others.

The chairman stated that to make impact on the global stage, many manufacturers in Nigeria have processed Expression of Interest (EOI) with the World Health Organization (WHO) for Pre-qualification of Products-Manufacturers processing WHO Pre-qualification and have invested over \$50 million in the last five years.

He noted that they have also developed manufactured and registered products for The UN Commission on Life-Saving Commodities for Women’s and Children’s Health (UNCoLs) such as: Zinc Sulphate/Oral Rehydration Solutions to manage Diarrhoea, Chlorhexidine gel to manage Cord care and Amoxicillin Dispersible Tablets.

He acknowledged the Support of NAFDAC, Federal Government of Nigeria and the West African Health Organization (WAHO), the WHO Pre-qualification of Medicine Team and finally the Boards of these companies for their patriotism and commitment to the Nigerian Project.

To improve the sector, the Akpa recommended that “an Import Adjustment Tax of 20% on imported Finished Pharmaceutical Products of HS Codes 3003 & 3004 should be imposed immediately as applied to other sectors where Nigeria has capacity as allowed by the CET; input into pharmaceutical manufacturing should be allowed to be imported at 0% by bonafide Pharmaceutical Manufacturers” as well as support from Government, Pharmaceutical Innovators, International Suppliers and Partners.