

RESUMED FIFTH MEETING OF THE INB (12-16 JUNE 2023)

DRAFT WTO SECRETARIAT STATEMENT FOR PLENARY SESSION

12 June 2023

1. The WTO Secretariat makes these preliminary remarks on the provisions on its own responsibility and without prejudice to the positions of its Members.
2. First, we would welcome the opportunity to work with the WHO and relevant stakeholders to strengthen the enabling environment for rapid, equitable, and effective access to pandemic-related products, as foreseen in Article 13 on "supply chain and logistics". WTO Members are actively considering related issues. For example, discussions at the INB may benefit from the summary of the main lessons learned by WTO Members from the COVID-19 pandemic in relation to trade in COVID-19 essential goods (see WTO document [G/MA/409](#) of 20 April 2023).
3. Second, we recognize an important step towards coherence regarding emergency trade measures in paragraph 6 of Article 13. The new language shows welcome similarities to paragraph 7 of the [2022 WTO's Pandemic Declaration](#).
4. Third, transfer of technology and geographic diversification of manufacturing capacities to ensure equitable access also take an important place on the WTO's pandemic preparedness agenda. Extensive discussions at the WTO have revealed different possible interpretations of the term "waiver", as used with respect to intellectual property rights in the different variations of paragraph 5 to Article 11. If the CA+ is to refer to IP waivers, Member States might wish to consider how such waivers would relate to existing TRIPS flexibilities, and if clarifying language could enable domestic action.
5. Finally, we note our appreciation for expanded provisions on regulatory strengthening, and the continuing themes of transparency, cooperation, and partnership which reverberate throughout the Bureau's text.
6. The WTO Secretariat would be pleased to provide any additional factual information, including on other elements of the Bureau draft as appropriate. Thank you.