

## **JOINT MEETING OF THE INB AND WGIHR (21 & 24 JULY 2023)**

### **DRAFT WTO SECRETARIAT STATEMENT**

*For delivery following agenda item 3 on 24 July 2023*

1. The WTO Secretariat appreciates the opportunity to comment before the INB and WGIHR, and does so under its own responsibility and without prejudice to the positions of WTO Members.
2. The list of issues and topics that appear in both the Bureau's text of the CA+ and the compilation of proposed amendments to the IHR 2005 includes several topics with trade-related elements that place prominently on the WTO's agenda. This includes topic 5, on access to health products, including access to know-how, technology transfer, and the development of regional manufacturing capacity, and the allocation of vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics, embedded within topic 6 on access and benefit sharing.
3. These topics, among others, were the subject of two pandemic-related outcomes of the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference last June, and continue to be actively considered in various WTO bodies. Technology transfer, for example, has been at the center of recent submissions by developing and developed country Members, and we expect to intensify work in this area in the run-up to the 13th WTO Ministerial Conference to be held in February 2024.
4. We fully acknowledge that the determination of elements to be included in the CA+ and/or the amended IHR is the sole prerogative of WHO Member States. And we share Member States' interest in promoting synergies, compatibility, and coherence among not only the CA+ and IHR 2005, but with other organizations and international instruments. To this end, we stand ready to share, on request, in any format or fora, our deep technical expertise and experience on matters intersecting with trade.
5. Much as the pandemic highlighted the interdependence of trade and health systems, it would seem that issues under consideration by the INB and WGIHR can be tackled most effectively through partnerships and collaboration, including trilateral cooperation among the WHO, WIPO, and WTO Secretariats.
6. We will continue to follow the work of the INB and WGIHR closely, and remain at your disposal as appropriate. Thank you.