

SEVENTH MEETING OF THE INB (6-10 NOV, 4-8 DEC 2023)

DRAFT WTO SECRETARIAT STATEMENT FOR PLENARY SESSION

6 November 2023

1. The WTO Secretariat makes these remarks on its own responsibility and without prejudice to the positions of its Members.
2. WTO Members are working to build effective solutions to be prepared for and respond to future pandemics. We will briefly highlight those efforts to promote synergies and complementarity with the trade-related elements of the INB's draft negotiating text.
3. First, the General Council, the TRIPS Council and the Working Group on Trade and Technology Transfer are considering Member proposals to facilitate technology transfer and diversification of manufacturing capacity. The TRIPS Council is also discussing whether to extend, to COVID-19 therapeutics and diagnostics, the 2022 Ministerial Decision on the TRIPS Agreement, which includes a single targeted waiver of TRIPS Article 31(f).
4. Second, the Council for Trade in Goods and its subsidiary bodies have addressed export restrictions, regulatory requirements, international coordination, transparency, and trade facilitation, among other topics that also feature in the INB's draft negotiating text. We will share a report on lessons learned from the pandemic and another forthcoming report providing an overview of the work done in this area for the INB's consideration.
5. Third, the WTO's 2022 Pandemic Declaration mandates the WTO to work with the WHO on an international pandemic response, to include activities such as mapping manufacturing capacities and demand. We would welcome partnering on a Global Supply Chain and Logistics Network.
6. Finally, our experience has shown the critical importance of terminology. The instrument must use clear, operational language if it is to be implemented effectively by WHO Member States. We will provide more detailed observations on these matters in our written submission. Thank you.