

EIGHTH MEETING OF THE INB (19 FEBRUARY – 1 MARCH 2024)

DRAFT WTO SECRETARIAT STATEMENT FOR JOINT PLENARY SESSION WITH WGIHR

For delivery on 23 February 2024

1. The WTO Secretariat thanks the INB and WGIHR for the opportunity to comment, and does so under its own responsibility and without prejudice to the positions of WTO Members.

2. The WTO Secretariat has closely followed these parallel processes. Both the INB and WGIHR are considering proposals with trade-related elements that also feature on the WTO's agenda.

3. We take this opportunity to update WHO Member States on recent relevant developments at the WTO. On 15 February a factual report ([WT/MIN\(24\)/8](#)) was circulated to the upcoming 13th WTO Ministerial Conference on work undertaken in various WTO bodies and by the Secretariat pursuant to the 2022 Ministerial Pandemic Declaration ([WT/L/1142](#)). In reporting on its own activities ([IP/C/99](#)), the TRIPS Council committed to continue to review and build upon lessons learned and challenges experienced to build solutions to future pandemics. It noted that many WTO Members have expressed interest in deepening discussions on voluntary licensing, technology transfer, and the operation of Article 31(f) of the TRIPS Agreement, among other topics.

4. Last week the TRIPS Council also separately reported ([IP/C/100](#)) that despite considerable efforts, consensus could not be reached on whether to extend the 2022 Ministerial TRIPS Decision ([WT/L/1141](#)) to COVID-19 diagnostics and therapeutics.

5. Any further relevant developments that emerge from the 13th WTO Ministerial Conference to be held next week will be communicated in due course.

6. The WTO Secretariat is committed to supporting the work of the INB and WGIHR on matters intersecting with trade, and promoting synergies, compatibility, and coherence among our organizations and our instruments. We remain at your disposal as appropriate. Thank you.