



STATEMENT

6th Meeting of the Working Group on Amendments to the International Health Regulations (2005)

7 DECEMBER 2023, GENEVA – The innovative pharmaceutical industry remains steadfast in our commitment to constructively work with the Working Group on International Health Regulations (2005) (WGIHR). As we approach the end of the year and to ensure cross-instrumental cohesion, we stress the critical need for alignment with the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB).

It is in all our interests to ensure that the International Health Regulations (IHR) amendments are fit for purpose and include pragmatic actions to strengthen Member States' preparedness and response to public health events with the risk of international spread. Toward this end, the current direction of travel should be course corrected, avoiding duplication of issues in the WGIHR and INB and ensuring strict adherence to the WGIHR's technical mandate and scope.

Just as global health security and equitable access are two sides of the same coin, the WGIHR and INB must complement efforts, with the WGIHR strengthening country capacities to prevent, prepare for, and respond to public health events before they become public health emergencies of international concern, and with equity at the heart of the INB.

To modernize the IHR, the industry calls for Member States to build upon lessons learned from COVID-19 and bolster proven – not ideological – strategies, including:

1. Raising the alarm early by ensuring the rapid sharing of outbreak information and immediate access to pathogens and genetic data
2. Enabling the innovation ecosystem, including protecting incentives on intellectual property, to reinforce the pipeline for needed medical countermeasures
3. Fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships and dialogue, including with the private sector, to ensure balanced and implementable approaches.

We emphasize our immediate readiness to collaborate with the WGIHR.