



Joint Plenary Meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB) and the Working Group on Amendments to the International Health Regulations (WGIHR) (2005): Agenda item 2

21 July 2023, Geneva - The innovative pharmaceutical industry supports this joint plenary meeting to ensure coordination, collaboration, and alignment between the two negotiations.

With only nine months until May 2024, we should refrain from renegotiating the whole IHR, stop duplicate approaches, and leverage this opportunity to bridge the gaps on key issues, streamline overlapping positions, and find concrete landing zones on proposals.

While we are in this middle hour between crises, we urge Member States to heed the lessons learned from COVID-19. We must not compromise what worked well – preserving the innovation ecosystem and ensuring immediate and unhindered access to pathogens – and focus on what needs to be improved: equitable access to medical countermeasures. The Berlin Declaration is our practical proposal that puts equity at the front of our collective response, in addition to joint efforts for regional capacity building.

To do better than during COVID-19, anything that undermines our collective efforts to strengthen pandemic preparedness and response must be removed, including weakening of intellectual property and creation of hurdles for access to pathogens.

It is also necessary to open the door for an inclusive dialogue between all stakeholders, including having the relevant experts for key issues at the negotiating table. As Member States start to deep dive into technical topics, we encourage the Bureau to find balanced ways to integrate multi-stakeholder expertise and experience into discussions.

Our industry remains fully committed to constructively working with you now and moving forward.