

# WTO WORKSHOP ON TRADE AND PUBLIC HEALTH

## Opening Remarks by DDG Alan Wolff

MONDAY, 11 NOVEMBER 2019, 9:00, ROOM E

Good morning. I would like to welcome you to the WTO Workshop on Trade and Public Health. We are pleased to organize this activity,

Over these years, this activity has evolved to cover the link between Public Health and the WTO Agreements in an ever more comprehensive and multidisciplinary manner. Almost 500 government officials from developing and least developed countries have been trained so far. They have taken the acquired knowledge back home and shared it with colleagues. And, as we have heard from many of them, this knowledge has assisted them in conceiving and implementing new ways to improve access to health (e-27002600316 (0)7 (0)5) (0)0 (0)0-36 (0)1828 (0)20290-40

introduced an additional public health flexibility permanently into WTO rules. The resulting Special Compulsory Licensing System provides a secure legal pathway to ensure access to affordable generic medicines for countries that rely on imports for the treatment of their patients. This remarkable outcome shows how the multilateral rules-based system can respond to global health concerns.

Health is one of the more complex policy environments. It needs a multidisciplinary approach to find practical solutions for continuously evolving challenges. How do we respond.<sup>4</sup> ( )0Secretaria and the World Intellectual Property Organization is based on the principles of complementarity. In 2013, the Study on "

[Promoting Access to Medical Technologies: Intersections between Public Health, Intellectual Property and Trade](#)  
between different government authorities responsible for health, intellectual property and tra

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<sup>1</sup> Target: Support the research and development of vaccines and medicines for the communicable and noncommunicable diseases that primarily affect developing countries, provide access to affordable essential medicines and vaccines, in accordance with the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health, which affirms the right of developing countries to use to the full the provisions in the Agreement on Trade

issues. There will always be different points of view. The beauty of our work is finding practical solutions, which evolve with the needs of each country.

Nowadays, our lives are being rapidly re-shaped by new technologies. Trade is an essential tool to facilitate access to finished medicines, raw materials, machinery, services and new technologies. We all need to work together to find the optimal solutions to tackle diseases, growing populations, scarce resources and climate change. Trade is an important contributor to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. All countries are dependent to some extent on imports for their needs for medicines and other medical technologies. Therefore, facilitating trade is also part of enhancing access to health.

In the course of this week, you will be exposed to various policy dimensions with an effect on public health and how these relate to trade and other relevant agreements and treaties. Our objective is to ensure that you acquire the tools to analyse and formulate practical and effective policy choices. We also hope that this will be the start of