Thank you chair and distinguished delegates. With over 40 years of experience developing and scaling new health technologies for low-resource settings, PATH is engaged in every stage of the R&D pipeline. We offer the following comments from that perspective, highlighting what we feel is an under-addressed barrier to health technologies reaching those who need them in a timely fashion.

The GSPOA acknowledges the good work WHO has done in South-East Asia working to assist member states in building regulatory capacity and using this capacity to pool procurement under the EML. We encourage continued efforts by WHO in this area, with a focus on regional regulatory harmonization efforts. An analysis conducted by PATH shows that regulatory harmonization to speed introduction of only two health products (heat-stable carbetocin and amoxicillin dispersible tablets) by two years would result in roughly an additional 23,000 lives saved in Eastern and Southern Africa.

We applaud Dr. Tedros’ mention of WHO’s support for the African Medicines Agency in his report. We strongly suggest that member states step up their commitment to these alignment initiatives in the next phase of implementation as a core component of overall support for R&D and health technology innovation.