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BUREAU REGIONAL DU PACIFIQUE OCCIDENTAL**

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**ANNOTATIONS TO THE REGIONAL STRATEGY FOR IMPROVING
ACCESS TO ESSENTIAL MEDICINES IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC
REGION, 2005-2010**

A small group meeting to discuss the changes proposed by some Member States to the draft regional strategy for improving access to essential medicines in the Western Pacific (see document WPR/RC55/9, Annex 1) was held on 16 September 2004. The meeting was attended by representatives from Australia, China, France, Japan, Kiribati, New Zealand, the United States of America and Vanuatu. Ms Catherine Halbert (Australia) was elected as the chairperson. The group agreed that the following annotations be added as an annex to the regional strategy, in order to reflect the views of some Member States.

These annotations to the regional strategy for improving access to essential medicines in the Western Pacific Region, 2005-2010 identified the following points for consideration in the implementation of the regional strategy by Member States:

1. The overlap with trade-related matters is recognized within the strategy and hence implementation by Member States and WHO needs to recognize and comply with World Trade Organization (WTO) and World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) principles and rules and be consistent with international obligations in so far as they apply to improving access to essential medicines.
2. The implementation of the strategy should not be premised on the assumption that generic medicines will always be more affordable or preferable than patented medicines.
3. In implementing the strategy, all relevant sectors need to be consulted, including the pharmaceutical industry.
4. The importance of research and development in supporting continuing access to essential medicines must be an ongoing consideration in the implementation of the strategy.
5. Implementation of the strategy must emphasize and build a platform for inter- and intra-regional collaboration.