The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the upsides and downsides of international trade in medical goods and services. Open trade can increase access to medical goods and services, improve quality, and reduce costs. But excessive concentration of production, restrictive trade policies, supply chain disruptions, and regulatory divergence can jeopardize the ability of public health systems to respond to pandemics and other health crises. A new joint report from the World Bank Group and the World Trade Organization studies how trade in medical goods and services contributes to global health security and proposes ways to improve trade policies and international trade cooperation for pandemic prevention, preparedness and response.

This event will launch the report by presenting its main results. The presentation will be followed by a discussion among multilateral institutions, trade and health ministers, and policy experts, on how the trading system can be leveraged in the future for an improved collective response to emergencies.

Full programme to come