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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(17.3.2025)

Article 55(2) of the International Health Regulations (2005) (hereafter the ‘IHR’) provides that the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) shall communicate the text of any proposed amendment to all States Parties at least 4 months before the World Health Assembly at which it is proposed for consideration. This applies to any proposed amendment submitted by a State Party or the WHO Director-General pursuant to Article 55(1) of the IHR.

All proposals for amendments to the IHR, submitted by the IHR States Parties in September 2022, were circulated by the WHO Secretariat on 16 November 2022, that is 17 months before the 77th World Health Assembly, which begun on 27 May 2024, when the amendments were proposed for consideration and adopted.

In addition, the World Health Assembly established in May 2022 the Working Group on the IHR amendments (hereafter the ‘WGIHR’), which operated as a subdivision of the Assembly and was composed of all 196 States Parties to the IHR, and of the EU as a regional economic integration organisation participating to the negotiations of the IHR amendments. As such, the WHO Secretariat has complied with the technical requirements set out under Article 55(2) of the IHR by communicating not only the original proposals for amendments to the IHR, but also by communicating all draft changes to these original proposals developed by the WGIHR. These communications to all States Parties occurred at the conclusion of each WGIHR meeting.