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WORLD ORGANIZATION FOR ANIMAL HEALTH (OIE)

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(As an Observer)

As an intergovernmental organization, the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) is the organization recognized by the World Trade Organization (WTO) for setting standards on animal health and zoonotic diseases. The OIE also provides technical support to Member countries requesting assistance in animal disease control and eradication efforts. The OIE notably offers expertise, particularly to developing countries to help them control animal diseases that cause livestock losses, present a risk to public health or threaten other Member countries.

In its commitment to the implementation of the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement) the OIE cooperates with the WTO to assist the participation of developing countries in standard-setting activities and coordinates efforts with them to identify sanitary-related technical assistance needs and how best to address these.

Taking into account the need to ensure food safety and animal health both on internal markets and with respect to products traded internationally, the OIE recognizes the importance of ensuring sustainable development and is cognizant of the contribution of safe food and healthy animals to the alleviation of poverty, as well as to the facilitation of trade.

The OIE has already participated in funding the participation of developing country representatives to conferences such as the OIE/FAO conference on Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and the WHO/FAO/OIE consultation on Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE). Furthermore, it has signed an agreement of cooperation with the World Bank to improve support to veterinary services in developing countries, particularly in areas relevant to implementation of the SPS Agreement on animal disease control.

Future activities include seeking financial assistance for participation of technical personnel from developing countries as observers in ad hoc expert meetings, to improve their expertise and capacity for compliance with international standards; and the seeking of support for formal collaboration by laboratories and reference centres in developed countries to strengthen the animal health infrastructures of less developed countries on diseases of economic importance.

For further information about the OIE and its activities, please visit the OIE website (www.oie.int) or contact the OIE head office in Paris (telephone: +33 (1) 44 15 18 88; fax: +33 (1) 42 67 09 87; e-mail: oie@oie.int).
