



10 December 2019

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Page: 1/1

General Council

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## STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE RULES-BASED MULTILATERAL TRADING SYSTEM

COMMUNICATION FROM AFGHANISTAN; ARGENTINA; AUSTRALIA; BANGLADESH; BENIN; BRAZIL; BRUNEI DARUSSALAM; BURUNDI; CAMBODIA; CAMEROON; CANADA; CHAD; CHILE; COLOMBIA; COSTA RICA; DOMINICAN REPUBLIC; EGYPT; EL SALVADOR; GRENADA; GUATEMALA; GUYANA; HONG KONG, CHINA; ICELAND; JAMAICA; KENYA; REPUBLIC OF KOREA; THE STATE OF KUWAIT; LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC; LIECHTENSTEIN; MALAWI; MALAYSIA; MALI; MAURITANIA; MEXICO; REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA; MONGOLIA; MONTENEGRO; MYANMAR; NEW ZEALAND; NIGERIA; NORTH MACEDONIA; NORWAY; PAKISTAN, PANAMA; PARAGUAY; PERU; QATAR; SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS; SAINT LUCIA; SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES; SENEGAL; SINGAPORE; SWITZERLAND; THAILAND; TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO; TURKEY; UKRAINE; URUGUAY; VANUATU AND VIET NAM

10 December 2019

The following statement, dated 10 December 2019, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of Switzerland.

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1.1. We, a group of 60 of developing and developed Members, are concerned about the challenges that the WTO is facing.

1.2. We greatly value the WTO and reaffirm the central and indispensable role of the institution within the rules-based multilateral trading system. We remain committed to full participation in the important ongoing, regular work of the WTO. We will continue working together with all Members towards delivering meaningful outcomes, including through the WTO's negotiating function. We will intensify our efforts to ensure that the 12<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference is a success.

1.3. We reaffirm our commitment to abide by the WTO's binding rules in the conduct of our trade relations, which has helped to foster international trade and development, provided predictability, facilitated the effective settlement of trade disputes, and served as a bulwark against protectionism. This has contributed to the strength and stability of the global economy.

1.4. The dispute settlement system of the WTO is a central element in providing security and predictability to the multilateral trading system. We therefore deeply regret that as of 11 December 2019, the Appellate Body is no longer able to perform its full functions.

1.5. We reaffirm our strong commitment to the fundamental principles of the WTO dispute settlement system, notably the adoption of reports by negative consensus and the two-tier nature of the system. We note that the WTO's dispute settlement system continues to offer mechanisms for the settlement of disputes among Members. We reaffirm our commitment to resolve our trade disputes in accordance with the Dispute Settlement Understanding. We call on all Members to engage in dispute settlement proceedings in good faith and to act in a manner conducive to the prompt and final settlement of disputes.

1.6. We recall our strong resolve to finding concrete solutions, to identified concerns, under the auspices of the WTO's General Council and stress the urgency of filling all current vacancies on the Appellate Body.

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