

**General Council Meeting
23-24 February 2022**

Statement by India – Delivered by Ambassador & PR to the WTO

Agenda Item 10: IMMEDIATE ACTION TO SUPPORT THE MULTILATERAL TRADING SYSTEM IN PREPARATION FOR A SUCCESSFUL MC12 – COMMUNICATION FROM ARGENTINA; AUSTRALIA; BRAZIL; BRUNEI DARUSSALAM; CANADA; CHILE; COLOMBIA; COSTA RICA; DOMINICA; DOMINICAN REPUBLIC; ECUADOR; EL SALVADOR; EUROPEAN UNION; GUATEMALA; HONDURAS; HONG KONG, CHINA; ICELAND; ISRAEL; JAPAN; KAZAKHSTAN; KENYA; REPUBLIC OF KOREA; LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC; LIECHTENSTEIN; MEXICO; REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA; MONGOLIA; MONTENEGRO; MOROCCO; NEW ZEALAND; NORWAY; PANAMA; PERU; PHILIPPINES; QATAR; SINGAPORE; SWITZERLAND; THE SEPARATE CUSTOMS TERRITORY OF TAIWAN, PENGHU, KINMEN AND MATSU; THAILAND; TURKEY; UKRAINE; UNITED KINGDOM; URUGUAY AND VANUATU (WT/GC/W/841/REV.1)

India would like to thank the co-sponsors of WT/GC/W/841/REV.1 for their submission.

2. We agree with the broad contents and message contained in the submission, including the commitment to an early convening of MC12 and ensuring its success. However, we are a bit surprised that in the runup to MC12 some of the co-sponsors have not really lived up to the communique, neither in letter nor spirit. Let me highlight the following:

3. While the Communique emphasizes the commitment of the cosponsors “to develop a tangible and effective WTO response both to the current pandemic and future ones to ensure that multilateral trade rules, including the intellectual property system, support international efforts to ramp up and diversify the global production of vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics as well as to promote their development and equitable distribution”, we have seen how some Members who are also co-sponsors of this communique have stood in the way of reaching outcomes which could have made a difference to mankind during this pandemic. Their business-as-usual approach during this once in a lifetime pandemic situation will be a case-study for this organization.

4. The Communique also emphasizes the commitment of the cosponsors “to reaching a meaningful agreement on harmful fisheries subsidies, in line with SDG 14.6”. However, we have seen during the fisheries subsidy negotiations, these Members have shown no willingness to even discuss and conclude negotiations on S&DT provisions and on the principle of ‘common and differential responsibilities’;

and have constantly argue that S&DT should only be resolved by Ministers and not by experts! So, we fail to understand the meaning of their iterations in this communique on SDG 14.6.

5. Even more surprising is their so called commitment and I quote “to continuing the reform process under Article 20 of the Agreement on Agriculture with a view to making progress on multilateral agriculture negotiations, in a manner that truly supports food security and encourages sustainable agriculture and food systems”. All of us know when and how some of these Members have and continue to block any meaningful outcome on PSH, a measure mandated and supported by a large majority of WTO Members for ensuring food security.

6. The communique urges Members to work towards “reaching pragmatic and tangible outcomes in all areas as soon as possible”. However, we have seen how during the negotiations some of the co-sponsors have continued to hold on to their entrenched positions, while advocating the need for compromise to others. They keep spinning new narratives to justify their positions and interests, while simply ignoring positions and interests of other Members. Its time they ponder and look inwards, how their continued resistance has led to deadlocks in this organization which has lasted for decades.

7. Chair, as we approach MC12, we wish to see some of the co-sponsors of the communique, to live up to their communique’s message, both in letter and spirit. That would really help in ensuring a successful MC12.

I thank you Chair.
