

**General Council Meeting
(27-28 July, 2021)**

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

Agenda Item 2: Implementation of the Bali, Nairobi and Buenos Aires Outcomes – Statement by the Chairman

General Intervention on PSH

Thank you Chair. Good Morning colleagues. I join other Members in welcoming new Ambassadors and wishing all the best to those who are leaving Geneva. As a G33 Member, we will miss presence of Ambassador Siregar. Thank you Chair for your statement on this agenda item.

2. Chair, as we work towards outcomes for MC 12, we would like to reiterate the Ministerial mandates from Bali and Nairobi regarding an effective, permanent outcome on Public Stock Holding for food security purposes. The ministerial mandate for PSH is clear, that the PSH negotiations have to be on an accelerated, separate track, any effort to link these discussions with other pillars is undermining the ministerial mandate.

4. Chair, if the WTO membership cannot deliver on the mandated issues of the past ministerial meeting, then first, its competency comes under question, second, it leaves a doubt in the mind whether it will honor in future, outcomes of MC12 if any. In nutshell credibility of the WTO hinges on the outcomes of the Bali and Nairobi Ministerial Mandates, especially when the food security issues have become pronounced due to the ongoing pandemic.

5. The scale and its continuous resurgence over different parts of the world indicate that the pandemic may not be easing anytime soon. In these unprecedented times, WTO should get out of the self-imposed impasse and redeem itself by delivering a permanent solution on the PSH.

6. Pursuant to the Bali Ministerial Decision on Public Stockholding for Food Security Purposes and the General Council Decision of 2014 as contained in document WT/L/939, India notified the Committee on Agriculture that it has exceeded the de minimis level of market price support for rice for the marketing year 2018-2019 and 2019-20.

7. India's public stockholding programmes for food security purposes, covering rice and several other commodities, have been consistently reported in its Table DS: 1 notification since 1995.

8. India has been constructively engaging on this issue with other Members in the meetings of the Committee on Agriculture and Committee on Agriculture in Special Session. We do not support linking PSH outcomes with outcomes in other pillars. A simple, efficient, and permanent solution on extending **PSH for**

food security purposes to new programs and new products is therefore a key deliverable. In this regard, I suggest that the new submissions by the Africa Group and the proposal being worked upon by G33 are a good basis for CoASS to take the process forward.

9. Chair, the proponents calling for transparency should lead by example. It is seen that this one flag bearer of transparency submitted DS:1 Notification for the marketing year 2018-19 in May 2021 many months past the deadline of 30 September, 2019. (Table DS:1 for the Marketing Year 2018-19 was notified on 17 May, 2021 vide G/AG/N/EU/69). The Member has not submitted its DS:1 Notification for 2019-20, which is due for more than 10 months now. The Member gave its reasons in the past to explain the delay. While it feels it can have reasons not to notify in time, it is ironical, it does not see others can also have genuine reasons for not notifying in time.

10. As a responsible member of the WTO, India is conscious of its notification obligations and has been making consistent efforts to comply with them. Our Domestic support and Market Access notifications are up to date. Our track record with meeting our transparency obligations has been much better than that of several members pressing for enhanced transparency at the WTO.
