

General Council Meeting
(1 November 2023)

Statement by Hong Kong, China

Item 2. Follow-up to Outcomes of Ministerial Conferences

B. MC12 – Work Programme on Electronic Commerce

- Thank you, Chair, for giving me the floor and your welcoming remarks. I would also like to join you in sending my best wishes to the outgoing ambassadors.
- On the Work Programme on E-Commerce, I would like to start by registering Hong Kong, China's appreciation of the able leadership of Ambassador Canabady. She has been instrumental to the reinvigoration of the work under the Work Programme, following our MC12 mandate.
- Intensified discussions on various topics with active engagement by the WTO Membership at large inspire confidence that the Work Programme is on solid footing to deliver outcome at MC13.
- The next MC is less than 4 months away; it is indeed high time for us to prioritize evidence-based discussions on issues that have a direct impact on trade flow.
- The extension of the Moratorium on E-Commerce stands out in this respect. The Moratorium provides the business community with the much needed predictability for the revival of trade in the post-pandemic era.
- The world expects WTO to make progress, and do our utmost to close divergence. Hong Kong, China looks forward to seeing the joint report of the WTO, UNCTAD, the IMF, the OECD and the World Bank on the impact of the moratorium, as it will inform a constructive discussion based on facts and evidence.
- With the benefit of evidence-based discussions and the very wide support already there from Members at different stages of development, Hong Kong, China is optimistic that a GC decision for an extension of the Moratorium beyond MC13 should be the second concrete outcome after the one on LDC graduation.

- New disciplines in the area of consumer protection are also crucial to healthy trade growth and the relevancy of the WTO in responding to changes in the world economy.
- Hong Kong, China will continue to accord our highest priority to working constructively with Members in robust discussions on these important issues in the run-up to MC13.
- Thank you.

Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Geneva
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