

**Formal Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC) and
Informal Heads of Delegation (HoDs) Meeting**
(20 July 2023)

Hong Kong, China's Statement

Item 3: Statements by Participants

- Thank you, Madam DG.
- We would like to first thank you and GC Chair, for your stewardship in bringing forward the various negotiations and discussions; we would also like to thank chairs of the negotiating bodies for their respective reports this morning.
- With progresses so far on different fronts, Hong Kong, China remains optimistic that we are building the foundation for a successful MC13.

Fisheries Subsidies Negotiations

- On fisheries, we are pleased to note the progress made in the second-wave negotiations, and is confident that Members will keep up the momentum as we move on to the text-based negotiations soon. We are hopeful that the coming Senior Officials Meeting would provide further impetus to achieving, by MC13, the two goals of bringing into force the Fisheries Subsidies Agreement and further enhancing the disciplines.
- On this note, we are glad to report that Hong Kong, China is planning to deposit our Instrument of Acceptance for the Fisheries Subsidies Agreement soon, later this quarter.

E-commerce

- On e-commerce, we note that some Members have called for a special session on e-commerce in the margins of the Senior Officials Meeting; Hong Kong, China supports this approach, in the hope that high-level dialogues would help drive convergence on issues of common interests, such as legal architecture and horizontal disciplines, and help the membership reach substantial conclusion by the end of this year.

- As for MC13, making the moratorium permanent or at least securing its extension continues to be one of Hong Kong, China's key priorities. In view of the "sunset" clause in the MC12 ministerial decision, we hope that the relevant discussion will commence soon.

Investment Facilitation for Development (IFD)

- On IFD, Hong Kong, China welcomes the recent conclusion of negotiations on the text of the IFD Agreement.
- The IFD initiative has so far attracted participation of over two-thirds of the membership. We encourage all Members to positively review the text with a view to incorporating this meaningful outcome to the WTO architecture, in the hope that we may reach another landmark by MC13.

Dispute Settlement System

- On dispute settlement system, restoring a fully functioning, two-tiered dispute settlement system accessible by all is Hong Kong, China's top priority.
- The timeline set out in the MC12 Outcome Document is tight. Hong Kong, China values the informal substance-based discussion currently underway, and the target to concretise ideas and start a drafting exercise in the coming months. We urge Members to keep up the momentum and aim for significant progress by MC13.

WTO Reform

- On WTO reform, Hong Kong, China is delighted to see the progresses made on improving day-to-day functioning and procedural matters by various WTO bodies and the Secretariat.
- To provide further impetus to the process, Hong Kong, China suggests that GC Chair may revisit the idea of holding a dedicated discussion on the negotiating function and appointing facilitator(s)/ "Friends of the Chairperson" to assist the process, for discussion of common emerging issues and horizontal procedural reforms. The Secretariat may also consider extending the current efforts of categorising proposals to cover also substantive issues.

- With efforts on all fronts, we expect that this could form a good progress report for the Senior Officials Meeting and, in time, concrete outcomes at MC13.
- Last but not least, we would like to join other colleagues to congratulate Colombia on its national day, and to bid farewell to Ambassador Chambovey and DDG González. We would also like to express our deepest condolences to New Zealand.
- Thank you.

Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Geneva
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