

**Informal Trade Negotiations Committee and
Informal Heads of Delegations Meeting
on 25 June 2021 (Friday)**

Hong Kong, China's Statement

- Thank you, DG. I would like to join other colleagues in extending a warm welcome to all DDGs.
- Following your suggestion, I will focus on where Hong Kong, China stands on the three possible deliverables for MC12 identified in your Convening Notice.

WTO's Response to the Pandemic

- First, WTO's response to the pandemic. Hong Kong, China believes it is important for Members to work in a coordinated and collaborative manner. It is in this spirit that we have joined as a co-sponsor of the draft General Council Declaration on Trade and Health: COVID-19 and Beyond. We will continue to participate constructively in the relevant discussions.
- We also welcome the recent appointment of Ambassador David Walker of New Zealand as the facilitator to assist Members in developing a multilateral and horizontal response to the pandemic. We look forward to working closely and constructively with other Members under Ambassador Walker's leadership on this important deliverable.

Agriculture

- Turning to agriculture, Hong Kong, China supports including in the outcome of MC12 the exemption from export restrictions on foodstuff purchased by the World Food Programme for non-commercial humanitarian purposes.
- We see great values in the work of the World Food Programme and would endorse the draft General Council Decision on this subject presented in December last year. We urge Members to continue to engage in discussions on this subject with a view to forging a consensus early.

Dispute Settlement

- Lastly, on dispute settlement. Hong Kong, China is concerned about the continued impasse in the Appellate Body (AB), which has undermined the dispute settlement function of the WTO, a key pillar of the rules-based multilateral trading system.
- We believe we should accord top priority to restoring a fully functioning two-tier WTO dispute settlement system, and we share DG's view that we should try find a way forward in providing a roadmap to resolve the AB impasse and develop a shared understanding on the necessary reforms to the dispute settlement mechanism.
- Even if we are unable to develop a full solution to the AB before MC12, we should at least show our resolve by working out a clear roadmap and timetable by MC12 on how to resolve the AB impasse.
- Thank you very much, DG.

Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Geneva
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