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General Council

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**STATEMENT ON 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; THE STATE OF KUWAIT; 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

*Revision**

The following communication, dated 22 February 2022, is being circulated at the request of the delegations of 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; the State of Kuwait; 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.

We, a group of developing and developed Members, confirm our commitment to a successful Twelfth WTO Ministerial Conference (MC12) and hope that it will be convened as soon as feasible in 2022. We regret that the MC12 had to be postponed due to the epidemiological situation.

We are conscious of the critical contribution that the WTO must provide to address the pandemic. The spread of COVID-19 has led to a devastating human tragedy and responding to this global health crisis remains a priority of our respective governments. Our focus continues to be on efforts to protect human life. Now more than ever is the time for the international community to step up cooperation, coordination and solidarity.

A predictable, transparent, non-discriminatory, rules-based and open multilateral trading system will be essential for broad-based and sustainable economic recovery. The WTO continues to be an essential tool for Members to achieve inclusive and sustainable global growth and development, including through the further integration of developing country Members and LDCs into world trade.

We urge Members to sustain momentum and to build on progress achieved to date with a view to reaching pragmatic and tangible outcomes in all areas as soon as possible.

* This revision is to add the State of Kuwait as co-sponsor to the communication.

In this regard,

We are committed to continuing our work 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 are committed to reaching a meaningful agreement on harmful fisheries subsidies, in line with SDG 14.6, which would respond to the imperative of sustainability of our oceans, seas and marine resources;

We are committed 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;

We believe that reform of the WTO's negotiating function, dispute settlement function, and monitoring and deliberative function is necessary and urgent. We acknowledge the need to ensure the WTO's proper functioning, including a fully and well-functioning dispute settlement system accessible to all Members. We commit to begin work on reform in all three areas immediately and to do so in an open-minded manner that considers all options, that is inclusive, and that takes into account the needs of Members at all levels of development.
