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General Council

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**STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE RULES-BASED MULTILATERAL TRADING SYSTEM
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION**

COMMUNICATION FROM ALBANIA; AUSTRALIA; KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN; BRUNEI DARUSSALAM; CABO VERDE; CAMEROON; CANADA; COSTA RICA; FIJI; THE GAMBIA; GUATEMALA; HONG KONG, CHINA; ICELAND; THE STATE OF KUWAIT; KYRGYZ REPUBLIC; LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC; LIBERIA; LIECHTENSTEIN; MALAYSIA; REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA; MONGOLIA; MONTENEGRO; NEW ZEALAND; NIGERIA; NORWAY; OMAN; PERU; PHILIPPINES; SIERRA LEONE; SINGAPORE; SWITZERLAND; SEPARATE CUSTOMS TERRITORY OF TAIWAN, PENGHU, KINMEN AND MATSU; TÜRKIYE; UKRAINE; UNITED ARAB EMIRATES; UNITED KINGDOM; URUGUAY; VANUATU AND YEMEN

The following communication, dated 9 April 2025, is being circulated at the request of the above delegations.

1.1. As the World Trade Organization (WTO) commemorates its 30th Anniversary, we take this opportunity to recognise the value and achievements of the WTO since it was established in 1995. Over the last three decades, the WTO has brought together 166 Members in the pursuit of shared prosperity. It has contributed to the economic development of both developed and developing Members, including Least Developed Countries (LDCs), by promoting trade liberalisation and facilitating economic integration, fostering stability, predictability, and consumers' trust while preserving incentives for innovation. The WTO's support for developing economies, including LDCs, has lifted millions out of poverty.

1.2. We therefore reaffirm the central and indispensable role of the WTO at the core of the rules-based multilateral trading system, which provides a predictable, transparent, non-discriminatory and open global trading system. In the face of mounting challenges, including disruptions in global supply chains, rising protectionism and climate change, our collective commitment to the WTO principles and the maintenance of trade openness is more crucial than ever.

1.3. We recommit ourselves to abide by the WTO's binding rules, which have provided certainty and predictability for businesses, built trust and confidence among consumers, and underpinned the growth of international trade and development. Strong rules facilitate the effective settlement of trade disputes and serve as a bulwark against protectionism and unfair practices. We also recognise the importance of plurilateral initiatives at the WTO, which have been vital in driving concrete progress in key areas of trade.

1.4. As we chart a path forward, we must recommit to pursue reforms so that the WTO will continue to respond to the needs of its diverse Membership, reinforce its relevance by responding to the challenges it faces and facilitating free and fair trade, and uphold the principles of inclusivity and cooperation, including by enhancing trade capacities. To adjust to the changing global trade and economic environment and enable trade to serve as an engine of growth and prosperity for all Members, the WTO must intensify its work towards the necessary reform of all its functions. As such, we will explore innovative approaches that will enable the WTO to deliver meaningful outcomes and restore a fully and well-functioning Dispute Settlement System.

1.5. Moving forward, we will work closely together to shape the future of the global trading system. We call on Members to act and take decisions in an outcome-oriented way and to undertake bold, collective action that reflects the changing dynamics of the global economy and responds to the challenges ahead. This would ensure that the WTO remains the bedrock of a free, fair, inclusive, sustainable, and rules-based multilateral trading system for generations to come.
