

**Dispute Settlement Body Meeting
(24 March 2025)**

Hong Kong, China's intervention

**Item 3. United States – Origin Marking Requirement (Hong Kong, China)
(DS597)**

- Thank you, Chair.
- We express our deep disappointment that the US has once again placed this matter on the DSB agenda. Our position has been clearly articulated in statements made in previous DSB meetings. The panel ruling in DS597 provided a thorough and impartial assessment of the issues at hand, and it is not for the US to unilaterally replace the panel's interpretation and application of WTO agreements with its own.
- While we see no merit in reiterating what has already been firmly established, we must emphasize that as a steadfast supporter of the rules-based multilateral trading system, Hong Kong, China (HKC) upholds the principles of fairness, respect, and due process. We expect all Members to do the same.
- It is therefore regrettable that the US continues to abuse DSB meetings as a platform for political posturing. The US' approach reflects a troubling presumption that it alone has the authority to interpret national security matters.
- The WTO is entrusted to safeguarding the right of every Member to an equal voice in trade matters and access to a fair and just dispute resolution process. The panel report of DS597 was circulated on 21 December 2022. The notification of appeal by the US on 26 January 2023 prevented the panel report from being considered for adoption at the DSB meeting on 27 January 2023. At that meeting, HKC expressed our deep frustration at being deprived of the legitimate right to allow the case be settled through a proper channel. Our position remains the same that we stand ready to proceed through the due process of appeal should the US lift its blockage on Appellate Body appointments.
- We remember fondly the days when Members who objected to a panel report had the chance to seek recourse through the Appellate Body. Regrettably, this essential safeguard to a fair and just appeal process in

settling trade disputes has been singlehandedly dismantled by the US. Even more regrettably, the very Member that has undermined this safeguard continues to exploit the DSB to legitimize its wrongdoing, repeating its fallacy in January, March, April, July, September, October, and December of 2023; January, March, April, June, September, and November of 2024; January of 2025; and again today, 15 times in total.

- When rules are being ignored, small economies being unfairly targeted, and the principles of fairness under threat, it is more critical to uphold the rules-based multilateral trading system and WTO's fundamental principles of non-discrimination. We reaffirm our commitment to upholding the integrity of the system that serves us all.

Item 6. Appellate Body Appointments: Proposal by Afghanistan; Angola; Antigua and Barbuda; Argentina; Australia; Bangladesh; Benin; Plurinational State of Bolivia; Botswana; Brazil; Brunei Darussalam; Burkina Faso; Burundi; Cabo Verde; Cambodia; Cameroon; Canada; Central African Republic; Chad; Chile; China; Colombia; Congo; Costa Rica; Côte d'Ivoire; Cuba; Democratic Republic of Congo; Djibouti; Dominica; Dominican Republic; Ecuador; Egypt; El Salvador; Eswatini; the European Union; Gabon; The Gambia; Ghana; Guatemala; Guinea; Guinea-Bissau; Honduras; Hong Kong, China; Iceland; India; Indonesia; Israel; Kazakhstan; Kenya; Republic of Korea; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Lesotho; Liechtenstein; Madagascar; Malawi; Malaysia; Maldives; Mali; Mauritania; Mauritius; Mexico; Republic of Moldova; Morocco; Mozambique; Myanmar; Namibia; Nepal; New Zealand; Nicaragua; Niger; Nigeria; North Macedonia; Norway; Pakistan; Panama; Paraguay; Peru; the Philippines; Qatar; Russian Federation; Rwanda; Saint Kitts and Nevis; Saint Lucia; Senegal; Seychelles; Sierra Leone; Singapore; South Africa; Switzerland; the Separate Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu; Tanzania; Thailand; Togo; Tunisia; Türkiye; Uganda; Ukraine; United Kingdom; Uruguay; the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela; Viet Nam; Zambia and Zimbabwe (WT/DSB/W/609/Rev.26)

- HKC thanks Colombia for introducing this proposal, which has the support of 130 Members.

- A fully functional dispute settlement system remains essential to ensuring fairness and predictability in the multilateral trading system. We regret that the Appellate Body remains dysfunctional. However, this does not mean that we cannot look forward. The collective efforts of Members shown in the DS Reform Process last year has demonstrated our keen desire to find solutions.
- The Multiparty Interim Appeal Arbitration Arrangement (MPIA) also serves as a testament to the fact that Members can work collaboratively to find pragmatic and innovative ways to resolve trade disputes. The MPIA reflects the commitment of participating Members to preserving a credible and impartial appeal mechanism. It stands as proof that, even in difficult situations, Members can work together to achieve meaningful outcomes.
- HKC firmly believes in the multilateral trading system, and we continue to support efforts towards restoring a fully functioning Appellate Body.
- Thank you, Chair.
