

**WTO General Council Meeting**  
**(22-23 July 2025)**

**Statement by Hong Kong, China**

**Item 4. Incorporation of the Investment Facilitation for  
Development Agreement into Annex 4 of the WTO  
Agreement – Draft Decision (WT/GC/W/927/Rev.2)**

- On the proposed incorporation of the IFDA, I should like to start by congratulating Liechtenstein on becoming the 127<sup>th</sup> party to the agreement, hence adding weight to the demand for making IFDA a building block of the Multilateral Trading System.
- Colleagues who spoke before me have all very eloquently highlighted the value of the IFDA. No doubt this Agreement benefits all WTO Members in unlocking the full potential of foreign direct investment as a catalyst for sustainable growth. But the group of Members which would benefit most are the developing and LDC Members which are eager to hone their attractiveness as destinations of FDIs. Anyone of us who truly cares about inclusive development of all would have lent support to its incorporation into the WTO Agreement.
- I sincerely call on the few Members who have resisted its incorporation to reconsider their position by seeing this proposed decision through the lens of public good.
- As far as I know, Ambassadors Choi of Korea, the facilitators and individual parties to the IFDA have extended the olive branch to the few who are not yet on board to support this decision for having constructive and good faith discussions.
- This Agreement is far too important for us to let it slip, so we would come back with the request again and again.
- Thank you.

**Item 6.1 WTO Reform – Report by the Facilitator**

**Item 8 Heightened Trade Turbulence and Responses from the  
WTO – Communication from China (WT/GC/272/Add.1)**

**Item 9 Respecting the Rules-Based Multilateral Trading System –  
Request from Brazil**

- The agenda of this General Council meeting has multiple interrelated items that deal with the current raging challenges to global trade, the need to strengthen the multilateral trading system and the WTO reform. In the interest of time, this intervention is intended to be a consolidated response of Hong Kong, China (HKC) to items 6.1, 8 and 9.
- The multilateral trading system is under siege today. Unilateral measures, protectionist tariffs and economic coercion that increasingly destabilize global trade also threaten to chip away at the very foundation of the rules-based multilateral trading system that's built over decades.
- We should care because we know trade has significant economic consequences that impact lives. When the Organization is facing a crisis, I think perhaps it's natural for us to point fingers at others, blaming others for the ills. That's one way that we can choose. But I think the solution – for this Organization, and for those of us who still care about the existence and the consolidation or reinforcement of this system – is solidarity.
- If you are very, very big, of course, you can throw your economic power around to get what you want. I've heard some Members say that they probably get a better deal if they negotiate outside of this house. But I'm sure for many of us, if not most of us, this Organization is too important for us to throw our hands up. I would not want to repeat what are the fundamental principles that make this Organization indispensable. I think this is what every one of us needs to do – some soul searching during the summer break. Exactly what makes the WTO so important? Why is it the bulwark? Why is it the bulwark against the raging tempest? Then, is it the tools, or is it our mindset, or is it the readiness of us to come to the table to negotiate that is causing this stalemate that we have today?
- For HKC, we are open to discuss anything; there is no off-limit. We are prepared to have difficult conversations. I've heard many

colleagues say that some things are not negotiable, some things are not touchable. I can understand why. But if we think that those are the things that are so important, we should be able to defend and argue why they should not be touched. But if we all just draw red lines and off-limits, then we end up staying where we are today. I think the discussions so far prove that we still have the mindset that it's business as usual. It is NOT. It's no longer business as usual. That's all I would like to say about the reform.

- Last but not least, I would like to commend the GC Chair and the Facilitator for taking up the difficult task of shepherding Members to have those difficult conversations. Let's be concrete about what we want to fix and why, and then we can have a concrete discussion on whether the solutions would serve the purpose of most of us.
- Thank you.

**Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Geneva**  
**July 2025**