

**Meeting of the General Council**  
(20-21 May 2025)

**Statement by Hong Kong, China**

***Item 6. Statement in Support of the Rules-Based Multilateral Trading System on the Occasion of the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the WTO***

***Item 7. Heightened Trade Turbulence and Responses from the WTO***

***Item 8. Fragmentation of Global Trade through Tariffs and the Global Costs***

- Today we have several agenda items (viz. items 6, 7 & 8) that appear to center on how the member-driven WTO should conduct itself in face of the exogenous shocks sent by recent waves of tariff measures. Hong Kong, China (HKC) is pleased to see that the deliberative function of this organization is being put to good use.
- As a matter of principle, HKC strongly opposes any arbitrary trade measures which curtail legitimate market access, and undermine the fundamental principles underpinning the multilateral trading system.
- The price of disrupted supply chain and diminished market efficiency is paid by businesses, consumers and workers across the globe.
- In face of these headwinds to free trade, we are encouraged by the recent dedicated efforts of the two major economic powers to de-escalate the trade tensions. The positive outcome of that initial dialogue is a crucial inflection point for restoring stability and predictability to the world trading system and rekindling trade and investment. We'll keep our fingers crossed that their continued engagement will stay in that same direction and remains WTO-compliant.
- The WTO exists to provide a predictable environment for economic growth. As we commemorate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the organization and heads towards the 14<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference, it is opportune time for all of us to reflect on the core values of the multilateral trading system and flesh out exactly what reform would ensure the resilience and relevance of this organization.

- Thank you, Chair.

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