

General Council Meeting (23-24 February 2022)

Hong Kong, China's Statement

Item 11 - Work Programme on Electronic Commerce and Moratorium on Imposing Customs Duties on Electronic Transmissions

- First of all, I would like to join others in bidding farewell to the departing colleagues and wishing them all good health and success ahead. I would also like to extend a warm welcome to the Permanent Representatives who have just arrived and look forward to working closely with them to further develop and strengthen the multilateral trading system.
- Hong Kong, China understands and notes that Members' views on the scope, definition and impact of the moratorium remain divergent. However, we believe that allowing the moratorium to lapse after MC12 would not help clarify the above issues, nor would it narrow the gaps among Members. Rather, it would only present itself as a backtrack on WTO's work on e-commerce, especially at a time critical for post-pandemic economic recovery.
- Hong Kong, China believes that it is pragmatic to extend the moratorium until MC13 while Members continue to deliberate on the complicated issues under the Work Programme.

Item 15 – Appointment of Officers to WTO Bodies

Item 16 – Election of Chairperson

- I would like to join other colleagues to express our sincere appreciation and gratitude to you Dacio for your excellent leadership as our GC Chair during the past year, steering us steadily through the uncertainties brought by the pandemic and many other challenges with transparency, impartiality and professionalism.
- I would also congratulate Ambassador Chambovey on his new role as the next GC Chair. I would assure the incoming GC Chair of Hong Kong, China's full support in the coming year.

**Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Geneva
February 2022**