

**Joint Statement Initiative on E-Commerce  
Heads of Delegation Meeting  
(30 January 2025)**

**Statement by Hong Kong, China**

- Thank you Chair and happy Lunar New Year to all of us who follow the lunar calendar for festivities. I should thank all three Co-Convenors for pressing ahead over the past five years and bringing us to where we are today.
- We entered into particularly choppy waters in 2024. I would like to express my special gratitude to James (Australia) and your team for finding the balance and trying to hold this group together as much as possible.
- I would also like to welcome Naoki (Japan) and your team for taking the baton of coordinating the ensuing work in 2025.
- Hong Kong, China (HKC) has signed up to the communication ([WT/GC/W/955](#)) to the General Council (GC) in December 2024. In that communication, we already foreshadowed the shared objective of bringing the Agreement on E-Commerce (the Agreement) to the GC again for adoption. HKC stands by that request and supports putting the request for adoption to the GC meeting in February. Given that the incorporation will not be an easy battle, I wonder if the proposed amendment to the communication for prescribing a specific placement within Annex 4 to the Marrakesh Agreement follows some established norms. If so, then whether there is the need to add an amendment to spell out a norm. If not, then should we not just follow the chronological order of plurilateral agreements listed in Annex 4 instead?
- On technical support and dedicated discussions on e-commerce related issues, HKC supports efforts to talk up the benefits of e-commerce and the relevance for WTO to develop disciplines. We are agnostic about whether such discussions are to be held under the rubric of this JSI, or the Work

Programme on E-Commerce, or on other platforms, so long as they are coordinated to create synergy rather than competition and distraction.

- Today, we have heard some colleagues reiterating the reasons why they could not co-sponsor the request for the moment. I think those views are also of value. The question is, whether deferring the request for adoption by two or three more GC meetings would help us get a better outcome.
- From the perspective of HKC, a pertinent question is whether the interim period could be used for exploring expansion of the scope of the Agreement to include additional elements such that a better balance of obligations and benefits could be struck, thereby enabling more participants to co-sponsor the request. The time may not be ripe for a decision today, but I hope that we can stay open minded to explore this possibility in 2025.

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