

**Trade Policy Review of India  
(First Session on 6 January 2021)**

**Statement of Hong Kong, China**

- Thank you, Chair. I would like to extend a warm welcome to India's delegation led by Dr Anup WADHAWAN, Secretary of Department of Commerce. I would also like to thank the discussant, Ambassador Sunanta, for sharing with us her insights, and the Secretariat for preparing the comprehensive report.
- Hong Kong, China and India have maintained long-standing trade and economic relations, and we value India as an important trading partner. In 2019, India was Hong Kong, China's 8<sup>th</sup> largest trading partner in merchandise trade, while Hong Kong, China was India's 5<sup>th</sup> largest trading partner. Our total merchandise trade amounted to US\$24.6 billion in 2019.
- Today, I would like to highlight three specific areas in India's trade policies, namely trade facilitation, anti-dumping measures and trade in services.
- On trade facilitation, India ratified the Agreement on Trade Facilitation in April 2016 and designated the majority of its commitments as Category A. As of January 2020, India had implemented 78.2% of its commitments.
- We are pleased to note that India introduced further trade facilitating measures during the reporting period, covering many different areas, such as reduction in the documents required for customs process, deferred payment of customs duties, automation of the customs clearance system for imports and exports, a new Authorised Economic Operator Programme which allows for self-certification by the Authorised Economic Operators, and direct port delivery and entry which reduces the release time and costs for imports and exports.
- India has also introduced electronic measures to further facilitate trade, including the Single Window Interface for Facilitation of Trade and the Indian Customs Electronic Gateway. These measures provide services such as integrated risk assessment, electronic filing of bills and supporting documents, e-payment of customs duties, electronic signing of customs documents, as well as online clearances.

- We commend India's continued efforts in simplifying and modernising its customs procedures to facilitate trade, in response to a rapidly changing economic and technological environment.
- Further, we are pleased to note that India has shared with the Committee on Trade Facilitation an illustrative list of measures taken in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These measures include a dedicated single window COVID-19 helpdesk for traders, 24/7 customs clearance facilities at designated ports, e-delivery of customs documents. We applaud India's dedicated efforts in facilitating trade and maintaining transparency during this challenging time.
- Turning to anti-dumping measures, we note with concern that India continues to be an active user of such measures. First, during 2015-19, India initiated 233 investigations, compared with 82 investigations during the previous review period 2011-14. Second, of the 53 anti-dumping measures subject to sunset reviews during 2015-19, anti-dumping duties were extended in 28 measures, i.e. 53% of the cases. Third, 58 anti-dumping measures imposed by India have been in place for over ten years.
- While we respect Members' legitimate rights to pursue necessary trade remedy actions, we believe that such rights should be exercised with caution and due restraint to ensure that measures are taken only if they are fully justified and are not used for protectionist purposes.
- We would also urge India to terminate the anti-dumping investigations concerning imports of "sun and/or dust control film", "flat rolled products of stainless steel" and "newsprint in rolls or sheets, excluding glazed newsprint" against Hong Kong, China.
- On trade in services, we note that the sector remained robust during the review period, which contributed more than half of India's GDP and continued to be the main driver of India's GDP growth. In this connection, we welcome India's continuous efforts to liberalise its trade policies and measures related to trade in services. We would encourage India to consider further liberalising the trade regime for foreign services providers, for instance, by reviewing restrictive market-access conditions or reducing the limits on foreign ownership.
- Chair, Hong Kong, China looks forward to fostering even closer trade and economic relations with India in the years ahead, in particular, in trade in services in sectors such as transport and travel services.

- We thank India for its replies to our written questions and wish India a very successful trade policy review.
- Thank you very much.

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