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Council for Trade in Goods

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COVID-19: MEASURES RELATED TO TRADE IN GOODS

COMMUNICATION FROM CANADA; COLOMBIA; COSTA RICA; HONG KONG, CHINA;
NEW ZEALAND; NORWAY; SINGAPORE; SWITZERLAND; AND URUGUAY

The following communication, dated 4 June 2020, is being circulated at the request of the Delegations of Canada; Colombia; Costa Rica; Hong Kong, China; New Zealand; Norway; Singapore; Switzerland; and Uruguay.

In support of efforts to address the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, many WTO Members have taken emergency measures and initiatives related to trade in goods. However, these measures were often implemented quickly, and knowledge of them may remain incomplete. To strengthen transparency and allow all WTO Members to have a better overview of the evolving set of measures and initiatives in place, we believe it is important to have a dedicated agenda item in the Council for Trade in Goods (CTG) on this topic in the months ahead.

In line with its mandate, the CTG has an established role and function well suited to support Members to keep track of COVID-19 related trade measures in a more systematic manner, and to provide a formal platform for Members to discuss these measures and initiatives with a view to better understanding them. We are of the view that such engagement could promote cooperation, which is key to effectively tackling this global crisis.

In this connection, we call on Members to continue providing to the WTO timely information and notifications on COVID-19 related measures and initiatives. Based on the information available and without duplication of other work at the WTO, we encourage the Secretariat to prepare a **factual report** that could facilitate Members' understanding of the measures in place, including their impact.

We welcome the fact that some subsidiary committees of the CTG have received information from Members on COVID-19 response measures and have started to discuss these measures at the technical level during Committee meetings. We encourage relevant subsidiary committees to include a dedicated section on COVID-19 measures in their respective reports to the CTG to support discussion in the CTG. The concerted efforts of the CTG and relevant subsidiary committees in addressing COVID-19 measures could support Members in their efforts to strengthen global value chains and pave the way for rebuilding the global economy.
