

31 May 2022

(22-4130)

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General Council

Original: English

WORK PROGRAMME ON ELECTRONIC COMMERCE

COMMUNICATION FROM AUSTRALIA; BRAZIL; CANADA; CHILE; COLOMBIA; COSTA RICA;
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC; ECUADOR; EL SALVADOR; EUROPEAN UNION; GEORGIA; GUATEMALA;
HONG KONG, CHINA; ICELAND; ISRAEL; JAPAN; KAZAKHSTAN; KOREA, REPUBLIC OF;
KYRGYZ REPUBLIC; LIECHTENSTEIN; MEXICO; MOLDOVA, REPUBLIC OF; MONTENEGRO;
NEW ZEALAND; NIGERIA; NORTH MACEDONIA; NORWAY; PANAMA; PARAGUAY; PERU;
RUSSIAN FEDERATION; SINGAPORE; SWITZERLAND; SEPARATE CUSTOMS TERRITORY OF
TAIWAN, PENGHU, KINMEN AND MATSU; TAJIKISTAN; THAILAND; UKRAINE; UNITED KINGDOM;
UNITED STATES AND URUGUAY

*Revision**

The following communication, dated 31 May 2022, is being circulated at the request of the above-mentioned delegations.

Since 1998, WTO Members have periodically taken decisions at Ministerial Conferences to continue their practice of not imposing customs duties on electronic transmissions. Recognizing the importance of maintaining certainty and predictability for business and consumers, particularly in the context of the current COVID-19 pandemic and for supporting the economic recovery, we propose that the Ministerial Conference adopts the following decision:

DRAFT MINISTERIAL DECISION

The Ministerial Conference decides as follows:

We agree to continue the work under the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce, based on the existing mandate as set out in WT/L/274. We will reinvigorate this work through intensified discussions on the basis of proposals submitted by Members, including regarding development-related issues. We instruct the General Council to hold periodic reviews in its session of July [and December] 2022 [and July 2023] based on the reports that may be submitted by the relevant WTO bodies and report to the next session of the Ministerial Conference.

We agree to maintain the current practice of not imposing customs duties on electronic transmissions until the 13th Ministerial Conference.

* This revision includes an additional sentence in the draft ministerial decision and adds Dominican Republic, Kyrgyz Republic, Nigeria and Tajikistan as co-sponsors.