



**General Council**

**AGENDA ITEM 2: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BALI, NAIROBI AND BUENOS AIRES  
OUTCOMES - STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN**

THURSDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2018

1.1. This item remains on the agenda to follow up on the decisions adopted in Bali, Nairobi and Buenos Aires – and do so in an inclusive and transparent manner.

1.2. On Friday, 12 October, I held a meeting with the Chairs of Regular Bodies, where we heard updates on the work taking place in WTO Councils and Committees, including with respect to the implementation of the Ministerial mandates.

1.3. Before I move on to my report, I take this opportunity to emphasize, as I also did at the meeting with the Chairs, the key role that the regular work in the WTO can play in addressing various challenges facing this organization today. In this respect, it is important to ensure that regular bodies function efficiently and be fully responsive to Members' needs and I believe this is crucial to improve the way this organization operates.

1.4. Let me now turn to my report, which today will focus on those areas where there are updates since my last report in July.

1.5. Regarding the Ministerial Decision on the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce, you will recall that, at the July meeting of the General Council, the Chairs of the four subsidiary bodies reported on developments in their respective areas. In addition, South Africa and India introduced a paper on the moratorium on Customs Duties on electronic transmissions. At that meeting, I mentioned that I would consult Members on the way forward with regard to the moratorium. Since then, I held bilateral consultations with some twenty delegations who responded to my invitation. On the basis of the views expressed by delegations through these consultations, I now intend to convene an open-ended informal meeting in late November. The details of this informal meeting will be communicated in due course. In the meantime, I welcome any ideas and suggestions to make this discussion informative and useful to all Members and I remain open to meet with any interested delegation. Let me also recall that the next review of progress of the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce will take place at the December meeting of the General Council.

1.6. Moving now to some of the Decisions on Agriculture, at its recent September meeting, the Committee on Agriculture adopted the report of its first triennial review of the Nairobi Decision on Export Competition<sup>1</sup>. With respect to the implementation of the Nairobi Decision by Members with scheduled export subsidies reduction commitments, Australia, Colombia, Israel, Norway, Switzerland and Uruguay have their revised schedule certified - while Canada, the European Union, South Africa and the United States have circulated draft revised schedules. Other Members with scheduled export subsidies commitments also had an opportunity at that meeting to update the Committee on the steps taken to implement the Decision.

1.7. The Committee also continued its review of the Bali Decision on TRQ Administration. Contributions from several Members, together with a background document on TRQ administration and fill rates prepared by the Secretariat, assisted these discussions. The Review of the Bali Decision is expected to conclude in 2019.

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<sup>1</sup> G/AG/28.

1.8. Turning to the LDC Services Waiver, at the meeting of the Services Council which took place last week, the LDC Group introduced a communication titled "Possible Elements for a Review of the Operation of Notified Preferences" which suggests a number of elements that could be part of the review mandated by the relevant Nairobi Decision.

1.9. In the debate, delegations offered their initial reactions to the communication and the LDC Group stated its readiness to engage productively. The Chairman will be consulting with delegations on how to advance the process so as to fulfil the Council's mandate.

1.10. Regarding the Bali Decision on Duty Free-Quota Free market access for LDCs, you will recall that last year it was not possible for the Secretariat to prepare a report on DFQF market access for LDCs due to divergent views expressed by some Members on its scope and coverage. The CTD Chairman recently held informal consultations with the key delegations involved to see if positions had changed. Since this is not the case, it does not seem possible for the Secretariat to prepare this report. Nonetheless, the mandated annual review for 2018 will still be carried out in the next CTD meeting on 21 November, albeit without a Secretariat report.

1.11. Regarding the Bali Decision on the Monitoring Mechanism on Special and Differential Treatment, there is still no common understanding on how to proceed with the review of the Mechanism, which was mandated to take place three years after the first formal meeting. The CTD Chair intends to hold consultations with Members to see whether a common understanding can be reached on the way forward.

1.12. On Aid for Trade, the CTD Chair recently held informal consultations so that Members could provide their inputs on the draft Aid for Trade monitoring and evaluation formats, which will form the basis of the next Global Review. Substantive comments were made, and it was agreed that the Secretariat will update the formats accordingly. The revised monitoring and evaluation formats should be ready for Members' consideration by the next formal CTD Aid for Trade meeting in November.

1.13. Lastly, on the implementation of the Agreement on Trade Facilitation, we now stand at 139 ratifications, covering nearly 85% of the total. There is progress also in the submission of Category A, B and C notifications which now stand at 114, 71 and 60 respectively. More important than the numbers themselves is the fact that these figures show a continued upward trend in terms of implementation of the Agreement.

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