



2 March 2021

(21-1796)

Page: 1/2

General Council

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

MONDAY, 1 MARCH 2021

1.1. This item remains on the agenda so that the General Council can continue to follow up, in a horizontal and transparent manner, on the Ministerial decisions adopted in Bali, Nairobi and Buenos Aires.

1.2. As always, my statement today is based on the information provided by the Chairs of the regular bodies on the implementation work taking place further to Ministerial mandates in their respective areas – and I take this opportunity to warmly thank them for their cooperation during our tenure this year.

1.3. Starting with Agriculture, as regards the follow-up to the Bali TRQ Decision, the review mandated under the Decision was concluded with the adoption of the agreed recommendations by the General Council in December 2019. The issue of the future operation of paragraph 4 of the underfill mechanism had remained outstanding, and the deadline for a decision was extended to the end of 2021. I understand that the Chair of the Committee on Agriculture has already started consultations with Members on this issue.

1.4. On Export Competition, with respect to the implementation of the Nairobi Decision by Members with scheduled export subsidies commitments, the situation is as follows: twelve Members have their revised schedules certified; two Members have circulated draft revised schedules; and two other Members updated the Committee on Agriculture on the steps taken to implement the Decision. The Chair has also initiated consultations on the second triennial review of the Nairobi Decision to be undertaken by the Committee this year.

1.5. Turning to the LDC Services Waiver, following an LDC Group proposal that the CTS organize a webinar to bring together LDC service suppliers and consumers of LDC services in Members having granted preferences under the Waiver, in December 2020 the Council for Trade in Services tasked the Secretariat with the preparation of a draft programme for the event.

1.6. I understand that the Secretariat has since circulated a draft programme for the webinar, which is based on an outline prepared by the LDC Group and incorporates delegations' comments. This draft will be considered at the CTS' meeting on 5 March.

1.7. On Preferential Rules of Origin for LDCs, you will recall that the General Council considered the Annual Report submitted in line with the Bali and the Nairobi decisions at its December meeting, and the Committee has not yet met this year.

1.8. I also refer you to the report I provided in December with respect to the decisions on Duty-Free Quota-Free market access for LDCs, and on the Monitoring Mechanism on Special and Differential Treatment.

1.9. Regarding Aid for Trade, at its last meeting on 16 February 2021, the CTD Session on Aid for Trade heard updates from Members about their efforts to mobilize finance to address the economic hardship created by the pandemic. The addendum to the 2020-22 Aid for Trade Work Programme provides for a Stocktaking Event to review the trade and development impact of COVID-19, together with the role that Aid for Trade can play in recovery and future resilience. An agenda for this event

on 23 to 25 March 2021, containing a programme of the sessions proposed by Members, is available on the WTO website.

1.10. Regarding the Trade Facilitation Agreement, the current rate of ratification remains at 93% of the membership.

1.11. And finally, regarding the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce, you will recall that at the December General Council meeting, the Chairs of the CTS, CTG and TRIPS Council reported on e-commerce discussions in their respective bodies. In addition, the item on the "Work Programme on Electronic Commerce and Moratorium on Imposing Customs Duties on Electronic Transmissions" requested by India and a joint communication from South Africa and India on "Reinvigorating the Work Under the 1998 Work Programme on Electronic Commerce" were also considered. Delegations had an extensive discussion in December that touched upon wide-ranging substantive and procedural issues. Such discussion is welcomed, and I once again urge all Members to continue to actively engage in discussions on the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce and the Moratorium. You will recall that the 2019 General Council Decision instructed the General Council to report to the 12th session of the Ministerial Conference. And I note we have a separate item on the Work Programme requested by India later on in our agenda.
