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General Council

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

MONDAY, 22 NOVEMBER 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. My report 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. For some issues, including the Work Programme on Small Economies, the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce, Moratorium on TRIPS Non-Violation and Situation Complaints, TRQ Administration, we have separate items later in the agenda – and we will hear the relevant developments at that point.

1.3. On the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce, I will report on my consultations under Item 8. With respect to the work in this area carried out by the respective bodies, the discussions are well reflected in the relevant Annual Reports which we will take up under Item 20.

1.4. In the area of Agriculture, with respect to the implementation of the Nairobi Decision on Export Competition, since my last report in October, Brazil submitted its draft modified schedule incorporating the Nairobi Decision. With this, out of the 16 Members with export subsidy reduction commitments at the time of the Nairobi Decision, 15 Members have circulated their draft schedules and 12 are already certified.

1.5. Moving now the Services Waiver for LDCs, at the October meeting of the Services Council, the LDC Group referred to the Declaration adopted by the LDC Trade Ministers outlining their priorities for MC12. Amongst the areas of special interest were a number of elements related to the LDC Services Waiver, which are aimed at improving the implementation of relevant Decisions and the preferences in favour of LDC services and service suppliers notified by Members to date.

1.6. On Preferential Rules of Origin for LDCs, let me draw your attention to the annual report of the Committee on Rules of Origin to the General Council in G/RO/94, which contains details about recent developments in preferential rules of origin and the work of the Committee on Rules of Origin in this area.

1.7. In addition, I should note that the LDC Group has also proposed that Members negotiate and adopt language to be inserted in the MC12 outcome document concerning the work of the Committee on Rules of Origin in this area (reflected in G/RO/W/210). We will hear the relevant developments on the status of these discussions under Item 10.

1.8. Regarding Duty-Free Quota-Free Market Access for LDCs, at its meeting held earlier this month, the Committee on Trade and Development undertook its annual review of the steps taken to provide DFQF market access to LDCs – as mandated by the relevant Bali Decision. The annual review provided the opportunity for some Members to share information on their DFQF schemes for LDCs.

1.9. The situation in the Monitoring Mechanism on Special and Differential treatment remains the same. At the meeting of the Monitoring Mechanism held earlier this month, the CTD Chair once again urged Members to come to a common understanding on how to move forward with the Mechanism. The Chair will be continuing to work with Members in informal settings to explore what could be done to make the Mechanism operational.

1.10. Regarding Aid-for-Trade, at the October CTD Aid for Trade session, Members reviewed the implementation of the Aid-for-Trade Work Programme. They also agreed to launch the 2022 Monitoring and Evaluation exercise. The self-assessment monitoring questionnaires are now ready for online completion on the WTO website, and the deadline for submission of the completed formats is 31 December. Responses to the monitoring exercise are key inputs for next year's Global Review that will focus on "Empowering Connected Sustainable Trade". I understand that the DG will shortly say a few words on the Global Review. (See Annex)

1.11. And finally, on Trade Facilitation, the Committee continues its work on the four-year review of the Agreement. The rate of implementation commitments to date stands at just over 70% for the entire Membership – and the rate of ratification remains at 94%, with 9 Members still to ratify.

1.12. This concludes my report.

ANNEX

**STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL ON
THE GLOBAL REVIEW OF AID-FOR-TRADE**

To use trade to better meet the needs of their people, developing countries need supply-side support, in terms of infrastructure but equally at the enterprise level. This is critical for our endeavours to ensure that the benefits of the multilateral trading system flow to all Members, especially the weakest and most vulnerable.

The Stocktaking Event on Aid-for-Trade this past March was one of my first high-level events after taking over as Director-General. It was a very successful event with Heads of other international organizations fully participating – and was useful in gauging the depth of the pandemic's impact on Members' trade and development prospects.

It also gave impetus to our actions to support the increased production and equitable roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines, diagnostics, and therapeutics. Unequal access to these COVID-19 countermeasures continues to weigh on the pace of economic recovery, particularly amongst our lowest income Members.

The pandemic has sharply accelerated the shift towards digital trade and e-commerce. The Global Review of Aid-for-Trade planned for July 2022 reflects this, with its theme of "Empowering connected sustainable trade."

We have to help developing countries prepare for new ways of working and trading. And we have to ensure that women-owned businesses and MSMEs can take advantage of new commercial opportunities, both online and offline, because this is critical for making the gains from trade more socially inclusive.

Aid-for-Trade must increasingly reflect the green transition which is gathering momentum. The Glasgow Climate Summit has clearly signalled the direction of travel for the global economy. And Aid-for-Trade should support our poorer Members to have a just transition even as the global economy de-carbonizes.

The ongoing Aid-for-Trade Monitoring and Evaluation exercise forms an essential component of the Global Review. I strongly urge you to participate in this survey. Your replies to the monitoring exercise will form an essential input for next year's Global Review.
