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General Council

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**JOINT STATEMENT REGARDING THE APPLICATION FROM BELARUS FOR ACCESSION TO
THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION**

COMMUNICATION FROM ALBANIA; AUSTRALIA; CANADA; EUROPEAN UNION; ICELAND; JAPAN;
REPUBLIC OF KOREA; MONTENEGRO; NEW ZEALAND; NORTH MACEDONIA; NORWAY; UKRAINE;
UNITED KINGDOM AND UNITED STATES

The following communication, dated 22 March 2022, is being circulated at the request of the delegations of Albania; Australia; Canada; European Union; Iceland; Japan; Republic of Korea; Montenegro; New Zealand; North Macedonia; Norway; Ukraine; United Kingdom and United States.

We collectively strongly condemn Russia's unjustifiable and unprovoked military aggression against Ukraine, which is enabled by Belarus. The attacks are causing widespread humanitarian consequences and resulting in the senseless deaths of innocent people. This is not just an attack on Ukraine. This is an attack on and an egregious violation of international law, the UN Charter and fundamental principles of international peace and security, as well as democracy, freedom, and human rights. We must ensure that those who do not support the rules-based international order cannot benefit from it.

With respect to the WTO accession process of Belarus, we recall that Members halted work on this accession after the fraudulent presidential election in Belarus in August 2020 and the Lukashenko regime's violent repression of peaceful protesters, which included imprisonment, beatings, and torture. We must now draw attention to Belarus' complicity in Russia's premeditated, illegal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine. We condemn Belarus for its complicity in Russia's aggression, which is incompatible with the values and principles of the WTO and of a just rules-based order. For these reasons, we have concluded that Belarus is unfit for WTO membership. We will not further consider its application for accession.

We urge Belarus to abide by its international obligations and to return to the rules-based international order.
