



### COMMUNICATION FROM THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

The following communication, dated 5 April 2022, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of the Russian Federation.

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The Russian Federation refers to the communication made by Albania and some other WTO Members regarding the application from Belarus for accession to the WTO (WT/GC/246 of 24 March 2022).

Pursuant to Article XII of the Marrakesh Agreement, any State possessing full autonomy in the conduct of its external commercial relations may accede to the WTO on terms to be agreed between it and the WTO. Nothing in the WTO Agreement stipulates that individual Members or a group of Members can unilaterally decide that a legitimately acceding State could be "unfit for WTO membership" with the goal of imposing suspension or total dismantling of the accession process. Only the acceding State can suspend its accession bid or terminate the accession.

At the same time, in accordance with the rules and well-established practice, membership of Working Parties on Accession is open to all interested WTO Members. Since some Members informed that they "will not further consider application of Belarus for accession", it means that:

- these Members are leaving the Working Party on the Accession of Belarus to the WTO, and
  - this Working Party will continue to work in accordance with its terms of reference and respective decisions of the General Council including the decision of the General Council taken during the meeting held on 31 January 1995 (WT/GC/M/1 of 28 February 1995).
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