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GENERAL COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT (2023)

The present report has been prepared in pursuance of the Procedures for an Annual Overview of WTO Activities and for Reporting under the WTO ([WT/L/105](#)).

Since its previous annual report¹, the General Council has held five regular meetings on 6-7 March, 8-9 May, 24-25 July, 1 November and 13-15 December, and one special meeting on 23 October. The minutes of these meetings, which remain in the record of the General Council's work, are contained in documents [WT/GC/M/203](#), [WT/GC/M/204](#), [WT/GC/M/205](#), [WT/GC/M/206](#), [WT/GC/M/207](#) and [WT/GC/M/208](#)^{2,3}.

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¹ The annual report of the General Council for 2022 was circulated in [WT/GC/256](#).

² To be issued.

³ The proposed agenda for these meetings were issued in: [WT/GC/W/869](#); [WT/GC/W/876](#); [WT/GC/W/898](#); [WT/GC/W/903](#); [WT/GC/W/904](#) ; [WT/GC/W/917](#) (order of meetings). Annotated agenda for the meetings of July, November and December, as well as the Special Meeting in October, were issued in [JOB/GC/348](#); [JOB/GC/362](#); [JOB/GC/363](#) and [JOB/GC/374](#) .

⁴ In the meetings of the General Council in 2023, some Members delivered statements under one item covering several items, as reflected in the respective minutes. Likewise, the General Council took up several items/sub-items together, as appropriate.

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1 REPORTS BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE TRADE NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE AND REPORTS BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL ([WT/GC/M/203](#); [WT/GC/M/204](#); [WT/GC/M/205](#); [WT/GC/M/207](#); [WT/GC/M/208](#) ⁵)

1.1. Ministers at Doha established a Trade Negotiations Committee under the authority of the General Council to supervise the overall conduct of the negotiations ([WT/MIN\(01\)/DEC/1](#)). In accordance with the Principles and Practices endorsed by the Trade Negotiations Committee at its first meeting in 2002 ([TN/C/M/1](#)), the TNC reports to each regular meeting of the General Council.

1.2. At the March, May, July, November and December meetings, the Director-General, as TNC Chairperson, updated Members on developments in this area, including on recent formal/informal TNC and informal HoDs meetings.⁶

1.3. At the March meeting, the representatives of the United States; Senegal; Vanuatu (the Pacific Group); Indonesia; Brunei Darussalam; Viet Nam; Egypt; Djibouti (LDC Group); Zambia; and Cameroon (African Group) spoke. The General Council took note of the report of the Director-General and of the statements.

1.4. At the May meeting, the representatives of Djibouti (LDC Group); the United States; and India spoke. The General Council took note of the report of the Director-General and of the statements.⁷

1.5. At the July meeting, the representative of India spoke. The General Council took note of the report of the Director-General and of the statements made.

1.6. At the November meeting, no discussion took place in light of the Senior Officials' Meeting, which had taken place from 23-24 October 2023. The General Council took note of the report by the Director-General.

1.7. At the December meeting, no discussion took place in light of the recent formal TNC and informal HODs meetings. The General Council took note of the report by the Director-General.

⁵ To be issued.

⁶ [JOB/GC/336](#); [JOB/GC/340](#); [JOB/GC/350](#); [JOB/GC/366](#). At the December meeting, the Director-General referred to her report delivered at the formal TNC and informal HODs meetings which took place on 12 December 2023, which was subsequently issued in [JOB/TNC/122](#).

⁷ Kenya (ACP Group) and Cambodia subsequently provided their statements, which have been reflected, as requested, in [WT/GC/M/204](#).

2 FOLLOW-UP TO OUTCOMES OF MINISTERIAL CONFERENCES ([WT/GC/M/203](#); [WT/GC/M/204](#); [WT/GC/M/205](#); [WT/GC/M/207](#); [WT/GC/M/208](#) ⁸)

2.1 MC12 – WTO Reform

- Report/Statement by the Chairperson

2.1. At the March⁹; May¹⁰; July¹¹; and November¹² and December¹³ meetings, the General Council Chairperson delivered reports/statements¹⁴, providing updates in the area of WTO reform, including on informal meetings on WTO reform¹⁵.

2.2. At the March meeting, the representatives of Argentina; Cameroon (African Group); Djibouti (LDC Group); Samoa (Pacific Group); Kenya (ACP Group); Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); Barbados (CARICOM); Panama; United Arab Emirates; Brazil; South Africa; the United States; Canada; China; Nigeria; Switzerland; Colombia; Chile; Nepal; Singapore; Indonesia; the Philippines; Japan; Jamaica; Bangladesh; the United Kingdom; Australia; Ukraine; Namibia; Uganda; Brunei Darussalam; the European Union; Türkiye; the Russian Federation; Norway; Sri Lanka; Chinese Taipei; Pakistan; Malawi; India; Paraguay; Peru; Tunisia; Egypt; Mauritius; Republic of Korea; Malaysia; Ecuador; Thailand; Viet Nam; the Plurinational State of Bolivia; Kazakhstan; Zimbabwe; Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Arab Group); and Kyrgyz Republic spoke.¹⁶ The General Council took note of the Chairperson's statement and of the other statements.

2.3. At the May meeting, the representatives of Cameroon (African Group); Djibouti (LDC Group); Kenya (ACP Group); Barbados (CARICOM); Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); the European Union; Argentina; Samoa (Pacific Group); Thailand; Singapore; Ecuador; China; Brazil; Norway; Republic of Korea; Peru; Japan; Paraguay; Indonesia; Brunei Darussalam; South Africa; the United States; New Zealand; Chile; Canada; Colombia; Ukraine; Uganda; Chinese Taipei; Israel; Jamaica; Switzerland; India; Uruguay; Egypt; Nicaragua; Mauritius; Bangladesh; Cambodia; the Republic of Moldova; the Philippines; Nigeria; Malaysia; the Russian Federation; Costa Rica; Viet Nam; Tanzania; Türkiye; Nepal; Pakistan; and The Gambia spoke. This item was taken up together with all other matters under the WTO reform item. The United States; the United Kingdom; the European Union; India; and Australia intervened again. The Director-General also made an intervention. The General Council took note of the GC Chairperson's report and of all the statements made.

2.4. At the July meeting, the representatives of Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); South Africa; Kenya (ACP Group); Trinidad and Tobago; Djibouti (LDC Group)¹⁷; Australia; Samoa (Pacific Group); Costa Rica; Türkiye; Brazil; the European Union; Ecuador (on behalf of co-sponsors of [WT/GC/W/881](#) and in national capacity); Colombia; Japan; Republic of Korea; Chile; Canada; Norway; China; the United Kingdom; the Philippines; Chinese Taipei; India; Switzerland; Thailand; Tunisia; the United States; Singapore; Barbados (CARICOM); Malaysia; Saint Lucia; Indonesia; Bangladesh; Guatemala¹⁸; Uruguay; Jamaica; Argentina; Nigeria; Paraguay; Kazakhstan; Malawi; Pakistan; Nepal; Egypt;

⁸ To be issued.

⁹ Under the sub-item on WTO Reform, the General Council took up all related matters and opened the floor only once, as reflected in the respective minutes of the meeting.

¹⁰ See footnote above.

¹¹ See footnote above.

¹² The General Council took up items 2.A.(i) – "WTO Reform" and 2.C. – "Paragraph 8 of the Ministerial Decision on the TRIPS Agreement – Duration of Extended Deadline" together and the floor was opened once.

¹³ The General Council took up items 3.A.(i) – WTO Reform – "Reform by Doing" ([JOB/GC/359/Rev.2; G/L/1523](#)); 3.A.(ii) Paragraph 24 of the Ministerial Declaration on the WTO Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic and Preparedness for Future Pandemics; and 3.A.(iii) Paragraph 8 of the Ministerial Decision on the TRIPS Agreement – Duration of Extended Deadline together and the floor was opened once.

¹⁴ [JOB/GC/337](#); [JOB/GC/342](#); [JOB/GC/349](#); [JOB/GC/367](#); [JOB/GC/376](#)

¹⁵ In 2023, dedicated informal meetings on WTO reform, under the General Council, took place in 2-3 February (focused on development); 16 June (focused on the deliberative function and institutional matters); and 25-26 September (focused on trade and industrial policy).

¹⁶ Under the sub-item on WTO Reform, the General Council took up all related matters and opened the floor only once.

¹⁷ At the request of the delegation of Djibouti, on behalf of the LDC Group, the LDC Group statement on WTO reform – shared with the GC Chairperson during consultations on 13 July 2023 – is also incorporated in the minutes of the July General Council meeting in Annex 1 of document [WT/GC/M/205](#).

¹⁸ This statement was delivered by Mr. Marco Molina of Guatemala, in his personal capacity and under his own responsibility, as the convenor of the informal process on Dispute Settlement reform.

Brunei Darussalam; the Russian Federation; Tanzania; Nicaragua; Cambodia; Mozambique; Ukraine; New Zealand; Sri Lanka; Lao PDR; the Republic of Moldova; and Zimbabwe spoke. The General Council took note of the GC Chairperson's report and of all the statements made. The Director-General made an intervention.

2.5. At the November meeting¹⁹, the representatives of Cameroon (African Group); Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); Djibouti (LDC Group); Guyana (CARICOM); Samoa (ACP Group); Fiji (Pacific Group); Fiji (national capacity); Nigeria; Mauritius; Jamaica; South Africa; Paraguay; Türkiye; Mozambique; Nepal; Brazil; Cambodia; Bangladesh; Egypt; Colombia; Zambia; Malaysia; Indonesia; the Russian Federation; India; Switzerland; Ecuador; the United Kingdom; Japan; Zimbabwe; Qatar; and Australia spoke. The Director-General also intervened. The General Council took note of the GC Chairperson's statement related to sub-items 2.A.(i) and 2.C. and of the statements made under these sub-items.

2.6. At the December meeting²⁰, the representatives of Nigeria; Djibouti (LDC Group); Guyana (CARICOM); Cameroon (African Group); Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (OECS); Samoa (ACP); the United Kingdom; the European Union; Bangladesh; Malaysia; Paraguay; Egypt; Russian Federation; Ecuador; Switzerland; China; the United States; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Brazil; Indonesia; the Plurinational State of Bolivia; the Republic of Korea; Japan and India spoke. The Director-General also intervened. South Africa took the floor again. The General Council took note of the GC Chairperson's statement and of the other statements made.

- Informal Meeting on Development of 2 and 3 February – Statement by the Chairperson

2.7. At the March meeting, as part of the GC Chairperson's report under WTO reform, he also reported on the recent Informal Meeting on Development, which took place on 2-3 February.

- Committee on Trade and Development Mandate: Focal Point for Consideration and Coordination of Work on Development in the WTO – Communication from India ([WT/GC/M/203](#) and [WT/GC/M/204](#))

2.8. At the March meeting, under the item on WTO reform, India presented its communication contained in [WT/GC/W/865](#).

2.9. At the May meeting, under the item on WTO reform, India provided an updated on its communication contained in [WT/GC/W/865](#).

- Reinforcing the Deliberative Function of the WTO to Respond to Global Trade Policy Challenges – Communication from the European Union ([WT/GC/M/203](#); [WT/GC/M/204](#); [WT/GC/M/205](#))

2.10. At the March meeting, under the item on WTO reform, the European Union presented its communication contained in [WT/GC/W/864](#).

2.11. At the May and July meetings, under the item on WTO reform, the European Union provided updates on its communication contained in [WT/GC/W/864](#).

- Improving inclusiveness by reviewing and evaluating external engagement – Communication from Colombia; Israel; The Philippines; The Separate Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu; and the United States ([WT/GC/M/204](#))

2.12. At the May meeting, under the item on WTO reform, the United States, on behalf of the co-sponsors, made a statement to introduce the item. They also presented a communication contained in [WT/GC/W/871](#).

¹⁹ See footnote 12.

²⁰ See footnote 14.

- Improving the Operations of WTO Bodies to Revitalise the WTO's Monitoring and Deliberative Function – Request from Canada; Costa Rica; and the United Kingdom ([WT/GC/M/204](#))

2.13. At the May meeting, under the item on WTO reform, the United Kingdom and Costa Rica, on behalf of the co-sponsors, introduced the item. They also presented the communication contained in [WT/GC/W/877](#).

- Maximising the Value of WTO Ministerial Conferences – Communication from Australia; Canada; China; Japan; New Zealand; Norway; and Thailand ([WT/GC/M/204](#); [WT/GC/M/205](#))

2.14. At the May meeting²¹, under the item on WTO reform, Australia introduced the communication contained in [WT/GC/W/873](#).

2.15. At the July meeting, under the item on WTO reform, Australia provided, on behalf of the co-sponsors, updates on its communication contained in [WT/GC/W/873/Rev.1](#).

- 30 for 30 Suggestions For Improving the Functioning in WTO – Request from India ([WT/GC/M/204](#); [WT/GC/M/205](#))

2.16. At the May meeting, under the item on WTO reform, India made a statement to introduce the item. India also presented a communication contained in [WT/GC/W/874](#).

2.17. At the July meeting, under the item on WTO reform, India provided updates on the communication contained in [WT/GC/W/874](#).

- Proposed Revisions to [WT/L/452](#) "Procedures for the Circulation and Derestriction of WTO Documents" – Communication from Australia; Canada; Colombia; Costa Rica; European Union; New Zealand; Switzerland; Separate Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu; and the United Kingdom ([WT/GC/M/205](#); [WT/GC/M/208](#)²²)

2.18. At the July meeting, under the item on WTO reform, Canada, on behalf of the co-sponsors, introduced the communication contained in [WT/GC/W/897](#).

2.19. At the December meeting, Canada, on behalf of the co-sponsors, provided an update on the item and communication contained in [WT/GC/W/897/Rev.1](#). The representatives of Chile; Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); China; the European Union; Japan; India; and Costa Rica spoke. The General Council took note of the statements.

- A Development Perspective on Institutional Reforms of the World Trade Organization – Communication from the African Group ([WT/GC/M/205](#))

2.20. At the July meeting, under the item on WTO reform, South Africa, on behalf of the African Group, introduced the communication contained in [WT/GC/W/895](#).

- WTO Ministerial Conferences – Communication from Brazil ([WT/GC/M/205](#))

2.21. At the July meeting, under the item on WTO reform, Brazil introduced the communication contained in [WT/GC/W/882](#).²³

²¹ At the May meeting, the item was titled "Maximising the Value of WTO Ministerial Conferences – Communication from Australia".

²² To be issued.

²³ See also [JOB/GC/310](#) and [WT/MIN\(22\)/W/6](#).

- Small Steps to Make a Difference – Communication from Australia; China; and Thailand (WT/GC/M/205)

2.22. At the July meeting, under the item on WTO reform, China, on behalf of the co-sponsors, introduced the communication contained in [WT/GC/W/879/Rev.2](#).

- Dispute Settlement Reform – Communication from the African Group (WT/GC/M/205)

2.23. At the July meeting, South Africa, on behalf of the African Group, introduced the communication contained in [WT/GC/W/892](#).

2.2 MC12 – Work Programme on Electronic Commerce

- Review of Progress (WT/GC/M/205)

2.24. At the July meeting, the General Council undertook the periodic review of the work in the Council for Trade in Goods; Council for Trade in Services; the Council for Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property; and the Committee on Trade and Development, in line with the MC12 Decision on the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce.²⁴ The representatives of Djibouti (LDC Group); Kenya (ACP Group); Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); Trinidad and Tobago (CARICOM); Samoa (Pacific Group); Singapore; Canada; Japan; Nigeria; Argentina; Pakistan; Australia; Tunisia; Nepal; Egypt; Ecuador; Costa Rica; Indonesia; Paraguay; Tanzania; Chile; Bangladesh; Chinese Taipei; Jamaica; South Africa; Sri Lanka; Hong Kong, China; the European Union; Switzerland; China; Thailand; Malawi; Nicaragua; the United States; the United Kingdom; Malaysia; the Republic of Korea; Brazil; India; and Cambodia spoke.

- Report by the Facilitator (WT/GC/M/203; WT/GC/M/204; WT/GC/M/205; WT/GC/M/207; WT/GC/M/208²⁵)

2.25. At the March²⁶, May, July²⁷, November and December meetings, Ambassador Dwarka-Canabady (Mauritius), in her capacity as Facilitator for the E-Commerce Work Programme and Moratorium, delivered reports to the General Council.²⁸

2.26. At the March meeting, the representatives of South Africa; India; New Zealand; the United States; Cameroon (African Group); Kenya (ACP Group); Trinidad and Tobago (CARICOM); Canada; Sri Lanka; Jamaica; the United Kingdom; Djibouti (LDC Group)²⁹; Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); Norway; Switzerland; Brazil; Panama; Singapore; Nepal; Pakistan; Japan; Ecuador; the European Union; Bangladesh; Tunisia; Samoa (Pacific Group); Chinese Taipei; Republic of Korea; Türkiye; Indonesia; Peru; Chile; Myanmar; Cambodia; Australia; Egypt; China; and Uganda spoke.³⁰ The Director-General also intervened. The General Council took note of the report by the Facilitator and of the other statements³¹.

2.27. At the May meeting, the representatives of Djibouti (LDC Group); Cameroon (African Group); Kenya (ACP Group); Trinidad and Tobago (CARICOM); Panama; Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); Fiji (Pacific Group); the European Union; Switzerland; Indonesia; China; Peru; Paraguay; the United

²⁴ [WT/MIN\(22\)/32](#)

²⁵ To be issued.

²⁶ At the March meeting, the item was titled "Work Programme on Electronic Commerce – Report by the Facilitator".

²⁷ At the July meeting, following the "Review of Progress", the GC Chairperson also provided an update on the Facilitator-led Dedicated Discussion, on behalf of Ambassador Dwarka-Canabady. The statement was subsequently circulated in document [JOB/GC/351](#).

²⁸ [JOB/GC/338](#); [JOB/GC/341](#); [JOB/GC/351](#); [JOB/GC/368](#); [JOB/GC/377](#)

²⁹ At the request of the delegation of Djibouti, on behalf of the LDC Group, the LDC Group statement delivered at the informal open-ended meeting of the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce held on 4 May 2023 – is also incorporated in the minutes of the May General Council meeting in the Annex of document [WT/GC/M/204](#).

³⁰ In their interventions, delegations also spoke on the other related sub-item, i.e., "Reinvigoration of Work Programme on Electronic Commerce and Moratorium on Imposing Customs Duties on Electronic Transmissions – Request from India and South Africa" and "A Role of Digital Public Infrastructure in Promoting E-Commerce – Communication from India ([WT/GC/W/863](#))".

³¹ Zambia subsequently provided its statement, which has been reflected, as requested, in [WT/GC/M/203](#).

States; Japan; Australia; Argentina; Bangladesh; Singapore; Nigeria; Canada; the United Kingdom; the Republic of Korea; Pakistan; Chinese Taipei; the Philippines; Egypt; Chile; Jamaica; Myanmar; Tanzania; Uganda; Nepal; Costa Rica; Ecuador; the Russian Federation; Senegal; the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; and, The Gambia spoke.³² The Facilitator spoke again. The General Council took note of the report by the Facilitator and of the other statements made.³³

2.28. At the July meeting, this matter was taken up, together with WTO reform, and the floor was opened once.

2.29. At the November meeting, the representatives of Djibouti (LDC Group); Cameroon (African Group); Fiji (Pacific Group); Samoa (ACP Group); Guyana; Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); the European Union; the United States; Nigeria; Jamaica; Singapore; Indonesia; Bangladesh; Barbados; Paraguay; Hong Kong, China; Switzerland; China; Cambodia; Egypt; and Pakistan spoke.³⁴ India intervened again. The General Council took note of the report by the Facilitator and of the other statements made.

2.30. At the December meeting, the representatives of Cameroon (African Group); Djibouti (LDC Group); Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); Samoa (ACP Group); Fiji (Pacific Group); Guyana; Brazil; the Philippines; Tanzania; Japan; the United Kingdom; Indonesia; Canada; Thailand; Singapore; Chile; Costa Rica; Bangladesh; the United States; Nigeria; Hong Kong, China; the Russian Federation; China; Egypt; Malaysia; Chinese Taipei; Ukraine; India; Cambodia; Nicaragua; Israel; the European Union; Jamaica; Pakistan; Kazakhstan; Australia; New Zealand; Republic of Korea; Norway; and Barbados spoke.³⁵ The General Council took note of the report by the Facilitator and of the other statements made.

- Reinvigoration of Work Programme on Electronic Commerce and Moratorium on Imposing Customs Duties on Electronic Transmissions – Request from India and South Africa ([WT/GC/M/203](#); [WT/M/204](#); [WT/GC/M/205](#))

2.31. At the March, May, July meetings, India and South Africa made statements on this matter.

- Role of Digital Public Infrastructure in Promoting E-Commerce – Communication from India ([WT/GC/M/203](#))

2.32. At the March meeting, India presented the communication "Role of Digital Public Infrastructure in Promoting E-commerce" ([WT/GC/W/863](#)).

- Reinvigorating the Work under the 1998 Work Programme on Electronic Commerce: A Development Approach to the Work Programme on E Commerce – Communication from the African Group ([WT/GC/M/204](#); [WT/GC/M/205](#))

2.33. At the May meeting³⁶, under the item on the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce, South Africa presented the communication entitled "A development approach on the Work Programme on E-commerce" contained in [WT/GC/W/875](#).

³² In their interventions, delegations also spoke on the other related sub-items, i.e., "Reinvigoration of Work Programme on Electronic Commerce and Moratorium on Imposing Customs Duties on Electronic Transmissions – Request from India and South Africa" and "A Development Approach to the Work Programme on E-Commerce (WPEC) – Request from South Africa".

³³ Cambodia subsequently provided its statement, which has been reflected, as requested, in [WT/GC/M/204](#).

³⁴ In their interventions, delegations also spoke on the related sub-item, i.e., "Reinvigoration of Work Programme on E-Commerce – Promoting Competition in E-Commerce ([WT/GC/W/902/Rev.1](#)) – Communication from India and South Africa.

³⁵ In their interventions, delegations also spoke on the other e-commerce related sub-items, i.e., "Challenges for Digital Industrialization in Developing Countries – Communication from South Africa"; "Draft Ministerial Decision on the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce ([WT/GC/W/909](#))"; and "Draft Ministerial Decision on the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce – Communication from South Africa ([WT/GC/W/911](#))".

³⁶ At the May meeting, the item was titled "A Development Approach to the Work Programme on E-Commerce (WPEC) – Request from South Africa"

2.34. At the July meeting, under the item on the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce, Cameroon, on behalf of the African Group, provided an update on the communication contained in [WT/GC/W/875/Rev.1](#).

- Reinvigoration of the Work Programme on E-Commerce – Promoting Competition in E-Commerce ([WT/GC/W/902/Rev.1](#)) – Communication from India and South Africa ([WT/GC/M/207](#))

2.35. At the November meeting, India and South Africa introduced the item and communication contained in [WT/GC/W/902/Rev.1](#).³⁷

- Challenges for Digital Industrialization in Developing Countries – Communication from South Africa ([WT/GC/M/208](#)³⁸)

2.36. At the December meeting, South Africa introduced the item and communication contained in [WT/GC/W/910](#).³⁹

- Draft Ministerial Decision on the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce - Communication from Australia; Canada; Chile; Costa Rica; Georgia; Hong Kong, China; Iceland; Israel; Korea, Republic of; Liechtenstein; Moldova, Republic of; Montenegro; Norway; New Zealand; Paraguay; Peru; Singapore; Switzerland; Separate Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu; Ukraine and the United Kingdom ([WT/GC/M/208](#)⁴⁰)

2.37. At the December meeting, Switzerland introduced the item and communication contained in [WT/GC/W/909](#).⁴¹

- Draft Ministerial Decision on the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce – Communication from South Africa ([WT/GC/M/208](#)⁴²)

2.38. At the December meeting, South Africa introduced the item and communication contained in [WT/GC/W/911](#).⁴³

2.3 MC12 - Paragraph 8 of the Ministerial Decision on The TRIPS Agreement – Duration of Extended Deadline⁴⁴ ([WT/GC/M/203](#); [WT/GC/M/204](#); [WT/GC/M/205](#); [WT/GC/M/207](#); [WT/GC/M/208](#)⁴⁵)

2.39. At the March⁴⁶, May⁴⁷, July, November⁴⁸ and the December⁴⁹ meetings, the GC Chairperson made statements⁵⁰ related to the duration of the extension of the deadline pertaining to paragraph 8 of the Ministerial Decision on the TRIPS Agreement.

2.40. At the March meeting, the representatives of South Africa; Djibouti (LDC Group); Switzerland; Cameroon (African Group); Indonesia; Maldives; Antigua and Barbuda; Tunisia; Samoa (Pacific Group); Japan; Mozambique; the United States; Nepal; Egypt; Brazil; Pakistan; Bangladesh; the

³⁷ This sub-item was taken up together with the report by the Facilitator and the floor was opened once.

³⁸ To be issued.

³⁹ This sub-item was taken up together with the report by the Facilitator and all other e-commerce-related sub-items and the floor was opened once. See also [paragraph 2.30](#).

⁴⁰ To be issued.

⁴¹ This sub-item was taken up together with the report by the Facilitator and all other e-commerce-related sub-items and the floor was opened once. See also [paragraph 2.30](#).

⁴² To be issued.

⁴³ This sub-item was taken up together with the report by the Facilitator and all other e-commerce-related sub-items and the floor was opened once. See also [paragraph 2.30](#).

⁴⁴ [WT/L/1141](#)

⁴⁵ To be issued.

⁴⁶ [JOB/GC/337](#)

⁴⁷ [JOB/GC/342](#)

⁴⁸ This sub-item was taken up together with the sub-item on WTO reform and the floor was opened once.

⁴⁹ This sub-item was taken up together with the sub-item on WTO reform and the WTO response to the COVID-19 pandemic and preparedness for future pandemics and the floor was opened once.

⁵⁰ [JOB/GC/337](#)

United Kingdom; China; and India spoke. The General Council took note of the GC Chairperson's statement and of the other statements made.

2.41. At the May meeting, the representatives of the United States; Djibouti (LDC Group); Cameroon (African Group); Kenya (ACP Group); South Africa; Nigeria; Argentina; Bangladesh; Switzerland; Brazil; Indonesia; Tanzania; Samoa (Pacific Group); the United Kingdom; the European Union; Jamaica; Paraguay; Japan; Chinese Taipei; and India spoke. The Director-General also intervened. The General Council took note of the GC Chairperson's statement and of the statements made.

2.42. At the July meeting, the representatives of Cameroon (African Group); Djibouti (LDC Group); Paraguay; Tanzania; Maldives; Nigeria; Bangladesh; Colombia; Indonesia; Argentina; South Africa on behalf of 65 co-sponsors; Brazil; Egypt; the Plurinational State of Bolivia; Switzerland; Mozambique; Pakistan; India; and Türkiye spoke. The General Council took note of the statements made.⁵¹

2.43. At the December meeting⁵², this item was taken up together with other sub-items under Item 3 and the floor was opened once. The TRIPS Council Chairperson delivered a statement under her own responsibility. Following Members' interventions, and in concluding the statement, the GC Chairperson noted that there appeared to be no emerging agreement among the WTO membership, and it was clear that discussions would need to continue. The General Council took note of the GC Chairperson's statement and of the other statements made.

2.4 Decision Text on Extension of the 17 June 2022 Ministerial Decision to COVID-19 Therapeutics and Diagnostics – Communication from South Africa ([WT/GC/W/913 - IP/C/W/694/REV.1](#)) ([WT/GC/M/208](#))⁵³

2.44. At the December meeting⁵⁴, South Africa presented the communication contained in [WT/GC/W/913 - IP/C/W/694/Rev.1](#).

2.5 MC12 – Paragraph 24 of the Ministerial Declaration on the WTO Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic and Preparedness for Future Pandemics – Statement by the Chairperson ([WT/GC/M/205](#); [WT/GC/M/208](#))⁵⁵

2.45. In line with paragraphs 23 and 24 of the MC12 Declaration on the WTO Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic and Preparedness for Future Pandemics⁵⁶, a stocktaking exercise of the work of WTO bodies listed in the declaration is to be undertaken yearly at the General Council until the end of 2024, based on the reports of these bodies.

2.46. At the July meeting, the General Council undertook the first stocktaking exercise.⁵⁷ The representatives of the United Kingdom; China; Djibouti (LDC Group); Kenya (ACP Group); the United States; South Africa; Switzerland; Japan; the European Union; and India spoke. The General Council took note of the GC Chairperson's statement and of all the statements made.

2.47. At the December meeting, the Chairperson provided an update on the work that has taken place in various WTO bodies on this matter (including [G/L/1521](#)).⁵⁸

⁵¹ Kenya (ACP Group); Cambodia; and Barbados subsequently provided their statements, which have been reflected, as requested, in [WT/GC/M/205](#).

⁵² See also [paragraph 2.6](#).

⁵³ To be issued.

⁵⁴ This item was taken up together with other sub-items under Item 3 and the floor was opened once. See also [paragraph 2.6](#).

⁵⁵ To be issued.

⁵⁶ [WT/MIN\(22\)/31 - WT/L/1142](#).

⁵⁷ The GC Chairperson's statement was subsequently circulated in document [JOB/GC/352](#)

⁵⁸ Sub-item 3.A.(ii) was taken up together with sub-items 3.A.(i) and (iii). The statement by the GC Chairperson was subsequently circulated in [JOB/GC/376](#). See also [paragraph 2.6](#).

2.6 Buenos Aires (MC11), Nairobi (MC10) and Bali (MC9) ([WT/GC/M/203](#); [WT/GC/M/204](#); [WT/GC/M/205](#); [WT/GC/M/207](#); [WT/GC/M/208](#)⁵⁹)

2.48. Since July 2014, the item on implementation of the Bali outcomes has been included on the General Council's agenda at the request of the Chairperson, to provide an update on the work taking place in the regular bodies which were directly working on the various Bali Decisions. After the Tenth and Eleventh Sessions of the Ministerial Conference, reports on the implementation of the Nairobi and Buenos Aires outcomes were also provided under this item.

2.49. At the General Council meetings in March, May, July, November and December, the Chairperson reported on the work taking place in WTO regular bodies with respect to the Bali, Nairobi and Buenos Aires Ministerial outcomes.⁶⁰

2.50. At the March meeting, the CTD Chairperson made a statement related to the new work programme for the Aid for Trade Initiative. The representatives of Cambodia; Djibouti (LDC Group); South Africa; India; Indonesia; and Pakistan spoke. The Director-General also spoke. The General Council took note of the reports of the GC Chairperson and the CTD Chairperson and of all statements made.

2.51. At the May meeting, the representatives of Cameroon (African Group); Cambodia; South Africa; India; Pakistan; Djibouti (LDC Group); Paraguay; Indonesia; Brazil; and China spoke. The General Council took note of the GC Chairperson's report and of the statements.

2.52. At the July meeting, the representatives of Djibouti (LDC Group); India; Kenya (ACP Group); South Africa; Indonesia; the European Union; and Pakistan spoke. The General Council took note of the GC Chairperson's statement and of all the statements made.⁶¹

2.53. At the November meeting, the representatives of India; Nigeria (African Group); Brazil; Paraguay; Indonesia; Cambodia; Djibouti (LDC Group); and Egypt spoke. The Director-General also intervened. The General Council took note of the GC Chairperson's report, the statement of the Director-General and of the statements.

2.54. At the December meeting, the representatives of India; Djibouti (LDC Group); and Paraguay spoke. The Director-General also intervened. The General Council took note of the GC Chairperson's report, the statement of the Director-General and of the statements.

3 THIRTEENTH SESSION OF THE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE – ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

3.1 Election of Officers ([WT/GC/M/205](#); [WT/GC/M/208](#)⁶²)

3.1. At the July meeting, the General Council formally agreed to appoint H.E. Dr. Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of State for Foreign Trade of the United Arab Emirates as Chairperson of the Thirteenth Session of the Ministerial Conference (MC13). The GC Chairperson congratulated the MC13 Chairperson on his appointment. H.E. Dr. Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi then delivered a statement. The Director-General also intervened. The GC Chairperson then invited, in line with customary practice, the coordinators of the three broad groupings to consult with their constituents with a view to putting forward their respective nominations for the three Vice-Chairpersons. The General Council would revert to this matter with a view to agree on the three MC13 Vice-Chairpersons. The representatives of Kazakhstan; Djibouti (LDC Group); the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; and India congratulated the MC13 Chairperson under this item.⁶³ The MC13 Chairperson

⁵⁹ To be issued.

⁶⁰ The GC Chairperson's statements were subsequently circulated in [JOB/GC/337](#); [JOB/GC/342](#); [JOB/GC/353](#); [JOB/GC/369](#) and [JOB/GC/378](#).

⁶¹ Cambodia subsequently provided its statement, which has been reflected, as requested, in [WT/GC/M/205](#).

⁶² To be issued.

⁶³ Other representatives welcomed the MC13 Chairperson's election throughout the General Council meeting under other agenda items.

intervened again to present Members the MC13 logo. The General Council took note of the statements.

3.2. At the December meeting, H.E. Dr. Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi addressed the General Council, in his capacity as MC13 Chairperson. The Director-General also intervened. The General Council then formally agreed to appoint H.E. Mr. Luc Magloire Mbarga Atangana, Minister of Trade (Cameroon); Hon. Mr. Todd McClay, Minister for Agriculture, Forestry, Hunting and Fishing, and Trade (New Zealand); and H.E. Jorge Rivera Staff, Minister of Trade and Industry (Panama) as MC13 Vice-Chairpersons.

3.2 Attendance of Observers ([WT/GC/M/205](#))

3.3. At the July meeting, the General Council agreed to repeat past practice, namely, to invite the Governments with regular observer status in the General Council plus the following five Governments, which had previously been granted observer status only at Ministerial Conferences, i.e., Cook Islands, Eritrea, Niue, San Marino and Tuvalu.

3.3 Attendance of Non-Governmental Organizations ([WT/GC/M/205](#))

3.4. At the July meeting, the General Council agreed to repeat past practice, namely, that a limited number of accredited NGO representatives were allowed to attend only the Plenary Sessions of the Conference, without the right to speak; applications from NGOs to be registered are accepted on the basis of Article V, paragraph 2 of the WTO Agreement, i.e., NGOs "concerned with matters related to those of the WTO"; and a deadline would be established for the registration of NGOs that wished to attend the Conference.

3.4 Request for Observer Status by Palestine ([WT/L/1171](#)) ([WT/GC/M/208](#)⁶⁴)

3.5. At the December meeting, the General Council agreed to grant Palestine Observer Status at MC13 on an *ad hoc* basis.

4 WORK PROGRAMME ON SMALL ECONOMIES – REPORT BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE DEDICATED SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT ([WT/GC/M/203](#); [WT/GC/M/204](#); [WT/GC/M/205](#); [WT/GC/M/207](#); [WT/GC/M/208](#)⁶⁵)

4.1. At the March, May, July, November and December meetings, the CTD Chairperson provided updates and informed Members of the ongoing work in this area, including the Secretariat background document⁶⁶. At the December meeting, the CTD Chairperson also reported that the Dedicated Session had agreed to the text contained in document [WT/COMTD/SE/W/46/Rev.2](#).

4.2. At the March meeting, the representatives of Guatemala (SVEs); Cameroon (African Group); Jamaica; Trinidad and Tobago; Ecuador; Sri Lanka; Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); Mauritius; the United Kingdom; the Russian Federation; Panama; Brazil; Samoa (Pacific Group); the European Union; China; and The Bahamas (CARICOM) spoke. The CTD Chairperson intervened again. The General Council took note of the report by the CTD Chairperson and of the statements made.

4.3. At the May meeting, the representatives of Guatemala (SVEs); Cameroon (African Group); Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); Trinidad and Tobago; Maldives; Mauritius; Ecuador; the European Union; Barbados (CARICOM); Jamaica; the United Kingdom; and Vanuatu (Pacific Group) spoke. The Director-General also intervened. The General Council took note of the report by the CTD Chairperson and of the statements made.

4.4. At the July meeting, the representatives of Guatemala (SVEs); Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); Kenya (ACP Group); Trinidad and Tobago; Barbados (CARICOM); the United Kingdom; Sri Lanka;

⁶⁴ To be issued.

⁶⁵ To be issued.

⁶⁶ [WT/COMTD/SE/W/45](#)

Mauritius; Jamaica; and Samoa (Pacific Group) spoke. The Director-General also intervened. The General Council took note of the report by the CTD Chairperson and of the statements made.⁶⁷

4.5. At the November meeting, the representatives of Guatemala (SVEs); Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); Barbados; Trinidad and Tobago; Maldives; Fiji (Pacific Group); Fiji (national capacity); Jamaica; Mauritius; Samoa (ACP Group); and the United Kingdom spoke. The General Council took note of the report by the CTD Chairperson and of the statements made.

4.6. At the December meeting, the representatives of Guatemala (SVEs); Barbados (CARICOM); Cameroon (African Group); Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); Maldives; Sri Lanka; Samoa (ACP Group); Fiji (Pacific Group); Trinidad and Tobago; the United Kingdom; Mauritius; El Salvador and Honduras spoke. The General Council agreed to forward the draft decision in document [WT/COMTD/SE/W/46/Rev.2](#) to the Thirteenth Ministerial Conference for adoption by Ministers and took note of the report in [WT/COMTD/SE/12](#) and of the statements.

5 THE DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE ASPECTS OF COTTON – PERIODIC REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL ([WT/GC/M/208](#)⁶⁸)

5.1. At the December meeting, the Director-General introduced her report. The representatives of Cameroon (African Group); Djibouti (LDC Group); Chad (C-4); Brazil; Paraguay; China and India spoke. The Director-General spoke again. The General Council took note of the statement by the Director-General and her report contained in [WT/GC/260](#) – [WT/CFMC/DG/10](#) – [WT/MIN\(24\)/1](#) and of the statements made.

6 WTO ACCESSIONS⁶⁹ ([WT/GC/M/203](#); [WT/GC/M/205](#); AND [WT/GC/M/208](#)⁷⁰)

6.1 2022 Annual Report by the Director-General ([WT/ACC/43](#) – [WT/GC/257](#)) – Statement by the Director-General ([WT/GC/M/203](#))

6.1. At the March meeting, the Director-General presented the Annual Report on WTO Accessions for 2022.⁷¹ The representatives of Sierra Leone (g7+ WTO Accessions Group); Kazakhstan; Portugal (Timor-Leste, Accession Working Party Chairperson); the United States; Lao PDR; Panama (Article XII Members); Indonesia; Cambodia; the European Union; Djibouti (LDC Group); the Russian Federation; Samoa; Cameroon (African Group); the United Kingdom; the Philippines; China; Morocco (Comoros, Accession Working Party Chairperson); India; Singapore; Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Arab Group); and the Republic of Moldova spoke. Several Observer Governments also spoke.⁷² The General Council took note of the Director-General's report and of the other statements made.

6.2 Briefing on the Latest Developments in the Accession of Comoros – Request from Morocco ([WT/GC/M/205](#))

6.3 Briefing on the Latest Developments in the Accession of Timor-Leste – Request from Portugal ([WT/GC/M/205](#))

6.2. At the July meeting, the Chairpersons of the accession Working Parties of Comoros⁷³ and Timor-Leste⁷⁴ provided updates on the status of Comoros' and Timor-Leste's accession negotiations. The representatives of Djibouti (LDC Group); Cameroon (African Group); Kenya (ACP Group); Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Arab Group); Samoa (Pacific Group); the United States; Australia;

⁶⁷ Brazil; Saint Lucia; Ecuador subsequently provided their statements, which have been reflected, as requested, in [WT/GC/M/205](#).

⁶⁸ To be issued.

⁶⁹ In 2023, an update on accession Working Party Chairpersonships was also provided under "Other Business", see further below.

⁷⁰ To be issued.

⁷¹ [WT/ACC/43](#) – [WT/GC/257](#)

⁷² Uzbekistan; Serbia; Belarus; Ethiopia; Sudan; Islamic Republic of Iran

⁷³ Ambassador Omar Zniber (Morocco). His full statement was subsequently circulated in document [JOB/ACC/COM/15](#).

⁷⁴ Ambassador Rui Macieira (Portugal). His full statement was subsequently circulated in document [JOB/ACC/TLS/11](#).

Mauritius; Indonesia; Panama (Article XII Members); China; Mozambique; the European Union; Angola; Brazil; Singapore; South Africa; Cabo Verde; Cambodia; and Kazakhstan spoke. Speaking as Observers, the representatives of Comoros⁷⁵ and Timor-Leste⁷⁶ also spoke. Under this item, the GC Chairperson also referred to her communication of 29 June, in which she had informed Members of the consensus on the appointment of Ambassador Saqer Abdullah Almoqbel (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) as Chairperson of the Working Party on the Accession of Iraq. The General Council took note of the statements by the accession Working Party Chairpersons and of the other statements made.⁷⁷

6.3. Under the same item, the GC Chairperson also referred to a communication that she had sent on 29 June, in which she had informed Members that, following the consultations that Deputy Director-General Xiangchen Zhang had carried out on her behalf, there was broad consensus on the appointment of H.E. Mr. Saqer Abdullah Almoqbel, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the WTO as Chairperson of the Working Party on the Accession of Iraq. The General Council took note of the statement of the GC Chairperson.

7 COMMITTEE ON BUDGET, FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – REPORTS ON MEETINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ([WT/GC/M/205](#); [WT/GC/M/207](#); [WT/GC/M/208](#)⁷⁸)

7.1. At the July meeting, the General Council approved the Budget Committee's specific recommendation in paragraph 11.7 of the report contained in [WT/BFA/211](#) urging Members and Observers under Administrative Measures to liquidate their arrears; took note of the statement by Ambassador Bettina Waldmann (Germany), the CBFA Chairperson; and adopted the reports contained in [WT/BFA/211](#) and [WT/BFA/212](#).

7.2. At the November meeting, the General Council approved the Budget Committee's specific recommendations in paragraph 4.16 of the report contained in [WT/BFA/213](#); took note of the statement by Ambassador Bettina Waldmann (Germany), the CBFA Chairperson; and adopted the reports contained in [WT/BFA/213](#), [WT/BFA/214](#) and [WT/BFA/215](#).

7.3. At the December meeting, the General Council took note of Ambassador Bettina Waldmann's statement, and the other statements made; approved the Budget Committee's specific recommendations in paragraphs 3.14 of the report in [WT/BFA/217](#); and adopted the reports contained in [WT/BFA/216](#) and [WT/BFA/217](#). The representatives of Chinese Taipei; Switzerland; Nigeria; Singapore; Indonesia; and Paraguay spoke. The Director-General also intervened. The United States then also spoke. The CBFA Chairperson intervened again.

8 TRIPS COUNCIL MATTERS ([WT/GC/M/208](#)⁷⁹)

A. ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE SPECIAL COMPULSORY LICENSING SYSTEM - PARAGRAPH 7 OF THE ANNEX TO THE AMENDED TRIPS AGREEMENT AND PARAGRAPH 8 OF THE DECISION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PARAGRAPH 6 OF THE DOHA DECLARATION ON THE TRIPS AGREEMENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH ([WT/L/540](#) AND [WT/L/540/CORR.1](#)) – REPORT OF THE COUNCIL FOR TRIPS ([IP/C/97](#))

B. PROPOSAL FOR A DECISION ON AN EXTENSION OF THE PERIOD FOR THE ACCEPTANCE BY MEMBERS OF THE PROTOCOL AMENDING THE TRIPS AGREEMENT ([IP/C/96](#))

8.1. At the December meeting, the General Council took note of the report of the TRIPS Council in document [IP/C/97](#) and adopted the draft decision in document [IP/C/96](#) extending the time period for acceptance by Members of the Protocol amending the TRIPS Agreement until 31 December 2025 or such later date as may be decided by the Ministerial Conference. The decision was circulated in [WT/L/1180](#). The representatives of Colombia and Nigeria spoke.

⁷⁵ Ambassador Sultan Chouzour (Comoros). The statement was subsequently circulated in document was [JOB/ACC/COM/14](#).

⁷⁶ Ambassador Maria de Lurdes Martins de Sousa Bessa (Timor-Leste). The statement was subsequently circulated in document [JOB/ACC/TLS/11](#).

⁷⁷ Japan subsequently provided its statement, which has been reflected, as requested, in [WT/GC/M/205](#).

⁷⁸ To be issued.

⁷⁹ To be issued.

9 TRADE RELATED CHALLENGES OF THE LEAST-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND WAY FORWARD: PROPOSAL FOR WTO SMOOTH TRANSITION MEASURES IN FAVOUR OF COUNTRIES GRADUATED FROM THE LDC CATEGORY – COMMUNICATION FROM DJIBOUTI ON BEHALF OF THE LDC GROUP ([WT/GC/M/203](#); [WT/GC/M/204](#); [WT/GC/M/205](#))

9.1. At the March meeting, Togo, on behalf of the LDC Group, provided an update on the revised proposal. The representatives of Bangladesh (Focal Point for LDC Graduation); Cameroon (African Group); Kenya (ACP Group); Angola; Niger; Tanzania; Mozambique; Nepal; Indonesia; Cambodia; Botswana; South Africa; Switzerland; Jamaica; Malawi; Norway; India; the Russian Federation; Myanmar; Australia; the United States; Nigeria; the European Union; China; the United Kingdom; New Zealand; Samoa (Pacific Group); Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Arab Group); Canada; Brazil; Singapore; Egypt spoke. The Director-General also intervened. Bangladesh and the United States then intervened again. The General Council took note of the statements⁸⁰ made.

9.2. At the May meeting, Zambia, on behalf of the LDC Group, presented an update on the LDC Group's revised communication on a smooth transition for graduated LDCs contained in [WT/GC/W/807/Rev.2](#). The representatives of Bangladesh (Focal Point for LDC Graduation); Cameroon (African Group); Kenya (ACP Group); Angola; Cabo Verde; Tanzania; Mauritius; Lao PDR; Cambodia; Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); Nepal; Argentina; Australia; Uganda; Lesotho; the European Union; Jamaica; Samoa (Pacific Group); South Africa; the United Kingdom; the United States; Barbados; Nigeria; Brazil; Japan; China; Niger; Senegal; the Russian Federation; Indonesia; India; and Singapore spoke. Djibouti (LDC Group) intervened again. The Director-General also intervened. The General Council took note of the statements made.

9.3. At the July meeting, Djibouti, on behalf of the LDC Group, provided an update on the discussions and work on the LDC Group's revised communication. The representatives of Bangladesh (Focal Point for LDC Graduation); Cameroon (African Group); Kenya (ACP Group); Egypt; Nigeria; Norway; Thailand; the United Kingdom; Paraguay; Tanzania; the European Union; Australia; Malawi; South Africa; Barbados; Zambia; Niger; Indonesia; Botswana; India; Lao PDR; Mauritius; Japan; Samoa (Pacific Group); Brazil; the United States; the Russian Federation; Cambodia; Mozambique; Nepal; Argentina; Singapore; Jamaica; Chad; Tunisia; China; and Morocco spoke. Djibouti (LDC Group) intervened again. The General Council agreed to instruct the Sub-Committee on LDCs to examine Annex 2 of the LDC proposal ([WT/GC/W/807/Rev.2](#)) and report back to the General Council by 30 November 2023 with any recommendations. The General Council took note of the statements.⁸¹ The Director-General made a statement.

10 LDC GRADUATION (ANNEX 2 OF [WT/GC/W/807/REV.2](#)) – REPORT BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT TO THE GENERAL COUNCIL ([WT/COMTD/LDC/30](#)) ([WT/GC/M/208](#)⁸²)

10.1. At the December meeting, the CTD Chairperson who has been chairing the meetings of the Sub-Committee on LDCs since September 2023, pending the election of the Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on LDCs, delivered the report to the General Council ([WT/COMTD/LDC/30](#)). The representatives of Djibouti (LDC Group); Bangladesh; Cambodia; Nigeria; Egypt; Nepal; China; Myanmar; South Africa; Tanzania; the European Union; Norway; the United Kingdom; the United States; Japan; Cameroon (African Group); Fiji (Pacific Group); Indonesia; Russian Federation; Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); Angola; India; Brazil; Republic of Korea and Singapore spoke. Djibouti (LDC Group) spoke again. In view of what she has heard, the GC Chairperson took note of the progress made in the discussions and encouraged the LDC Group, as well as interested Members – together with the CTD Chairperson – to continue their discussion in the Sub-Committee on LDCs. The General Council took note of the report by the CTD Chairperson and of the statements made.

⁸⁰ Zambia subsequently provided its statement, which has been reflected, as requested, in [WT/GC/M/203](#).

⁸¹ Namibia subsequently provided its statement, which has been reflected, as requested, in [WT/GC/M/205](#).

⁸² To be issued.

11 DRAFT GENERAL COUNCIL DECISION ON EXTENSION OF UNILATERAL DUTY FREE AND QUOTA FREE PREFERENCES IN FAVOUR OF COUNTRIES GRADUATED FROM THE LDC CATEGORY ([WT/GC/W/901](#)) – COMMUNICATION FROM DJIBOUTI ON BEHALF OF THE LDC GROUP ([WT/GC/M/206](#))

11.1. A Special Meeting of the General Council took place on 23 October⁸³ prior to the opening session of the Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM).⁸⁴ The representative of Djibouti, on behalf of the LDC Group, introduced the draft decision "Extension of Unilateral Duty Free and Quota Free Preferences in Favour of Countries Graduated from the LDC Category" contained in [WT/GC/W/901](#), which was before the General Council for adoption. The General Council adopted the draft decision.⁸⁵

12 UNILATERAL TRADE RESTRICTIVE MEASURES OF CERTAIN WTO MEMBERS – STATEMENT BY THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION ([WT/GC/M/203](#))

12.1. At the March meeting, the Russian Federation made a statement on this subject matter. The representatives of the United States⁸⁶; Ukraine; Nicaragua; and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela spoke. Belarus, speaking as an Observer, also made an intervention. The Russian Federation intervened again. The General Council took note of the statements.⁸⁷

13 MC12 DECISION IMPLEMENTATION - RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC – REQUEST FROM INDIA ([WT/GC/M/203](#))

13.1 Role of Telemedicine Services in Response to the Pandemic – Communication from India

13.2 Building a Pool of Health Professionals to Respond Effectively to Pandemic/Natural Disasters – Communication from India

13.1. At the March meeting, India presented the item and two communications related to the response to the pandemic, i.e., "Role of Telemedicine Services in Response to the Pandemic"⁸⁸ and "Building a Pool of Health Professionals to Respond Effectively to Pandemics/Natural Disasters"⁸⁹. The representatives of Djibouti (LDC Group); South Africa; Mauritius; Bangladesh; Sri Lanka; Cameroon (African Group); Egypt; Pakistan; Nepal; China; Indonesia; Japan; the United States; Republic of Korea; Switzerland; and Singapore spoke. India intervened again. The General Council took note of the statements.

⁸³ [WT/GC/W/903](#) and [JOB/GC/362](#).

⁸⁴ An Informal General Council meeting was convened on 17 October to prepare for this Special General Council Meeting.

⁸⁵ The decision was subsequently circulated in document [WT/L/1172](#).

⁸⁶ The United States spoke on its own behalf, as well as on behalf of Australia, Canada, the European Union, Iceland, Japan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States.

⁸⁷ The Islamic Republic of Iran, an Observer, subsequently provided its statement, which has been reflected, as requested, in [WT/GC/M/203](#).

⁸⁸ [WT/GC/W/866](#) – [S/C/W/426](#)

⁸⁹ [WT/GC/W/867](#) – [S/C/W/427](#)

14 POLICY SPACE FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT - A CASE FOR REBALANCING TRADE RULES TO PROMOTE INDUSTRIALISATION AND TO ADDRESS EMERGING CHALLENGES SUCH AS CLIMATE CHANGE, CONCENTRATION OF PRODUCTION AND DIGITAL INDUSTRIALISATION – COMMUNICATION FROM THE AFRICAN GROUP ([WT/GC/M/203](#), [WT/GC/M/205](#))

14.1 A Case for Rebalancing the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures (ASCM) – Policy Space to Promote Industrialisation in Developing Countries – Communication from the African Group ([WT/GC/W/880](#))

14.2 The Role of Transfer of Technology in Resilience Building: Reinvigorating the Discussions in the WTO on Trade and Transfer of Technology – Communications from the African Group ([WT/GC/W/883](#), [WT/GC/W/884](#), [WT/GC/W/885](#), [WT/GC/W/886](#), [WT/GC/W/887](#), [WT/GC/W/888](#))

14.3 A Case for Rebalancing the Agreement on Trade-Related Investment Measures (TRIMS) – Policy Space to Promote Industrialisation and Structural Transformation in Developing Countries ([WT/GC/W/896](#))

14.1. At the March meeting⁹⁰, Cameroon made a statement to introduce the item. Cameroon also presented a communication by the African Group contained in [WT/GC/W/868](#). The representatives of Brazil; Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); India; Mozambique; Kenya (ACP Group); China; Thailand; Namibia; Colombia; the European Union; Peru; Indonesia; Pakistan; Djibouti (LDC Group); Canada; Barbados; Jamaica; the United Kingdom; Singapore; Republic of Korea; Uruguay; Australia; Egypt; and South Africa spoke. Cameroon (African Group) intervened again. The Director-General also made an intervention. The General Council took note of the statements.⁹¹

14.2. At the July meeting, Cameroon, on behalf of the African Group, presented the item and communication contained in [WT/GC/W/868](#), as well as the three sub-items with the accompanying communications.⁹² The representatives of Egypt; the United States; the United Kingdom; Brazil; Argentina; Singapore; Colombia; Japan; India; Djibouti (LDC Group); the Republic of Korea; China; Thailand; Paraguay; Pakistan; Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); the European Union; Switzerland; Indonesia; South Africa; Norway; and Namibia spoke. The Director-General also made an intervention. Cameroon (African Group) intervened again. The General Council took note of the statements.

15 FOOD SECURITY THROUGH AGRICULTURAL REFORM: TOWARDS AGRICULTURE OUTCOMES AT THE 13TH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE - COMMUNICATION FROM ARGENTINA; THE PLURINATIONAL STATE OF BOLIVIA; BRAZIL; CHILE; COLOMBIA; COSTA RICA; ECUADOR; EL SALVADOR; GUATEMALA; HONDURAS; PANAMA; PARAGUAY; PERU; THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC; AND URUGUAY ([WT/GC/M/205](#))

15.1. At the July meeting, Ecuador, on behalf of the co-sponsors, introduced the item and presented the communication contained in [WT/GC/W/893](#). The representatives of Kenya (ACP Group); Cameroon (African Group); Djibouti (LDC Group); Brazil; Australia; Argentina; Ukraine; Switzerland; Nigeria; the United Kingdom; Peru; New Zealand; Sierra Leone; Panama; Costa Rica; Chile; Canada; Uruguay; South Africa; Paraguay; Jamaica; Colombia; India; Egypt; Tanzania; Mauritius; the Republic of Moldova; the Plurinational State of Bolivia; China; Indonesia; Pakistan; the United

⁹⁰ At the March General Council meeting, the item was titled "Policy Space for Industrial Development - A Case for Rebalancing Trade Rules to Promote Industrialization and to Address Emerging Challenges such as Climate Change, Concentration of Production and Digital Industrialization – Request from South Africa".

⁹¹ Mauritius subsequently provided its statement, which has been reflected, as requested, in [WT/GC/M/203](#).

⁹² A Case for Rebalancing the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures (ASCM) – Policy Space to Promote Industrialisation in Developing Countries – Communication from the African Group ([WT/GC/W/880](#)); The Role of Transfer of Technology in Resilience Building: Reinvigorating the Discussions in the WTO on Trade and Transfer of Technology – Communications from the African Group ([WT/GC/W/883](#), [WT/GC/W/884](#), [WT/GC/W/885](#), [WT/GC/W/886](#), [WT/GC/W/887](#), [WT/GC/W/888](#)); A Case for Rebalancing the Agreement on Trade-Related Investment Measures (TRIMS) – Policy Space to Promote Industrialisation and Structural Transformation in Developing Countries ([WT/GC/W/896](#))

States; Thailand; Japan; the Russian Federation; Zimbabwe; and the European Union spoke. Ecuador spoke again on behalf of the co-sponsors. The General Council took note of the statements.

16 PRINCIPLES GUIDING THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF TRADE-RELATED ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES – COMMUNICATION FROM THE AFRICAN GROUP (WT/GC/M/205)

16.1. At the July meeting, Cameroon on behalf of the African Group, introduced the item and communication contained in [WT/GC/W/894](#). The representatives of Kenya (ACP Group); Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); the European Union; China; Norway; Argentina; Canada; Türkiye; Paraguay; Chile; Brazil; the United Kingdom; South Africa; Mauritius; Indonesia; Colombia; Nigeria; India; Tanzania; Bangladesh; the Republic of Korea; Egypt; Switzerland; Ecuador; Japan; Australia; Jamaica; Pakistan; the United States; Djibouti (LDC Group); and Barbados spoke. The Director-General also intervened. Cameroon (African Group) intervened again. The General Council took note of the statements.

17 STRENGTHENING THE RESILIENCE AND STABILITY OF GLOBAL INDUSTRIAL AND SUPPLY CHAINS – COMMUNICATION FROM CHINA (WT/GC/M/205)

17.1. At the July meeting, China presented the item and communication contained in [WT/GC/W/891](#). The representatives of the United States; Japan; Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); India; Barbados; Switzerland; the European Union; Brazil; Thailand; South Africa; Norway; the Russian Federation; Egypt; the United Kingdom; and Singapore spoke. The Director-General intervened twice. China intervened again. The General Council took note of the statements.⁹³

18 MC13 – IMMEDIATE STEPS TO RESPOND TO FOOD INSECURITY – COMMUNICATION FROM SINGAPORE (WT/GC/M/208⁹⁴)

18.1. At the December meeting, Singapore introduced the item and communication contained in [WT/GC/W/908](#). The representatives of Cameroon (African Group); Fiji; Egypt; Japan; the United States; Tanzania; the Philippines; Ukraine; China; the European Union; Ecuador; the Russian Federation; Chinese Taipei; Switzerland; Mauritius; Senegal; the Republic of Korea; Australia; Mongolia; Kazakhstan; Israel; Paraguay; Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); Nigeria; Malaysia; Thailand; Norway; Indonesia; Brazil; Sri Lanka; India; the United Kingdom spoke. Singapore intervened again. The General Council took note of the statements.

19 PROPOSED MINISTERIAL DECLARATION FOR THE THIRTEENTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE: STRENGTHENING REGULATORY COOPERATION TO REDUCE TECHNICAL BARRIERS TO TRADE – COMMUNICATION FROM CAMEROON; CHINA; JORDAN; MACAO, CHINA; MYANMAR AND SEYCHELLES (WT/GC/M/208⁹⁵)

19.1. At the December meeting, China introduced the item on behalf of the co-sponsors. The representatives of Cameroon; Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); the United Kingdom; Seychelles; the Russian Federation; the European Union; the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela; Japan; Switzerland; the Philippines; Jordan; Singapore; Brazil; New Zealand; the Republic of Korea; Pakistan; Kazakhstan; and India spoke. China intervened again. The General Council took note of the statements.

20 DRAFT MINISTERIAL DECISION ON PROMOTING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND TRADE IN NFIDCS AND LDCS - REQUEST FROM THE AFRICAN GROUP (WT/GC/M/208⁹⁶)

20.1. At the December meeting, Cameroon, on behalf of the African Group, introduced the item. The representatives of Djibouti (LDC Group); Egypt; Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); Nigeria; the European Union; Paraguay; Sri Lanka; India; the United States; the Russian Federation; Canada;

⁹³ Argentina subsequently provided its statement, which has been reflected, as requested, in [WT/GC/M/205](#).

⁹⁴ To be issued.

⁹⁵ To be issued.

⁹⁶ To be issued.

Japan; Ukraine; Costa Rica; the United Kingdom; Australia; and Kazakhstan spoke. Cameroon intervened again. The General Council took note of the statements.

21 DRAFT MINISTERIAL DECISION ON SPS MEASURES - REQUEST FROM THE AFRICAN GROUP ([WT/GC/M/208](#)⁹⁷)

21.1. At the December meeting, Cameroon, on behalf of the African Group, introduced the item. The representatives of Paraguay; Chinese Taipei; Côte d'Ivoire; China; the Russian Federation; Egypt; Costa Rica; Australia; the European Union; and India spoke. Cameroon intervened again. The General Council took note of the statements.

22 TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCE – REQUEST FROM THE AFRICAN GROUP ([WT/GC/M/208](#)⁹⁸)

22.1. At the December meeting, Cameroon, on behalf of the African Group, introduced the item. The representatives of Chile; Tanzania; Egypt; the United States; Nigeria; Brazil; Switzerland; India; South Africa; the United Kingdom; Paraguay; Japan; and Canada spoke. Cameroon intervened again. The General Council took note of the statements.

23 THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE MULTILATERAL TRADING SYSTEM TO SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS – STATEMENT BY THE CAIRNS GROUP ([WT/GC/261](#)) ([WT/GC/M/208](#)⁹⁹)

23.1. At the December meeting, Australia, on behalf of the CAIRNS Group, introduced the item and statement contained in [WT/GC/261](#). The representatives of Cameroon (African Group); Ecuador; Egypt; South Africa; Brazil; Chinese Taipei; Chile; China; Nigeria; Paraguay; Indonesia; Japan; Malaysia; the Philippines; the Russian Federation; the European Union; Canada; Thailand; the United Kingdom; New Zealand; Costa Rica; Switzerland; India; the United States; and Argentina spoke. Australia intervened again. The Director-General also spoke. The General Council took note of the statements.

24 EUROPEAN UNION REGULATION ON SUPPLY CHAINS FREE FROM DEFORESTATION AND FOREST DEGRADATION – COMMUNICATION FROM ARGENTINA, COLOMBIA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, GUATEMALA, HONDURAS, PANAMA, PARAGUAY, AND PERU ([WT/GC/M/208](#)¹⁰⁰)

24.1. At the December meeting, Honduras, on behalf of the co-sponsors, introduced the item and communication contained in [WT/GC/W/912](#). The representatives of Peru; Brazil; India; Panama; China; Paraguay; Guatemala; Indonesia; Cameroon (African Group); Nepal (LDC Group); the Dominican Republic; Malaysia; Samoa (ACP Group); the Russian Federation; Chile; the European Union; Canada; Norway; Nigeria; Thailand; the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela; Colombia; the European Union; the United States; and Cambodia spoke. The General Council took note of the statements.

25 INFORMATION ON INVESTMENT FACILITATION FOR DEVELOPMENT – REQUEST FROM CHILE AND THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA ([WT/GC/M/208](#)¹⁰¹)

25.1. At the December meeting, Chile presented the item and information contained in [JOB/GC/373](#). The representatives of Cambodia; Nigeria; El Salvador; Honduras; Cameroon; Liberia; Brazil; Pakistan; Panama; Hong Kong, China; Singapore; Malaysia; the Russian Federation; Thailand; Switzerland; China; Costa Rica; the Philippines; Ecuador; the United Kingdom; New Zealand; the Kyrgyz Republic; the Dominican Republic; Myanmar; Lao PDR; the European Union; Japan; Saudi Arabia; Guatemala; India; the United States spoke. India intervened again. The representatives of the Republic of Korea and China also intervened. The General Council took note of the statements.

⁹⁷ To be issued.

⁹⁸ To be issued.

⁹⁹ To be issued.

¹⁰⁰ To be issued.

¹⁰¹ To be issued.

26 ENHANCING MULTILATERAL DELIBERATIVE FUNCTION ON ENVIRONMENT-RELATED TRADE MEASURES AND FOSTERING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT - REQUEST FROM CHINA AND COLOMBIA ([WT/GC/M/208](#)¹⁰²)

26.1. At the December meeting, China and Colombia introduced the item. The representatives of Brazil; Türkiye; Egypt; Indonesia; Paraguay; the Russian Federation; the Philippines; South Africa; Pakistan; India; the European Union; Singapore; Norway; Switzerland; the United Kingdom; and Japan spoke. China intervened again. The General Council took note of the statements.

27 REVIEW OF THE EXEMPTION PROVIDED UNDER PARAGRAPH 3 OF THE GATT 1994 ([WT/GC/M/203](#); [WT/GC/M/208](#)¹⁰³)

27.1. At the March meeting, the General Council conducted a review of the exemption granted to the US legislation (the Jones Act) which prohibits the use, sale or lease of foreign-built or foreign-reconstructed ships in US national waters – and takes place in the General Council every two years. In line with the procedure agreed by the Council in 2002, statements made at GC meetings in 2023, questions posed to the United States and related replies would form the basis of the 2023 review, together with the annual report provided by the United States ([WT/L/1165](#)). The representatives of the United States; Japan; Norway; the European Union; the Russian Federation; China; and Panama spoke. The United States spoke again. The General Council took note of the statements¹⁰⁴ and agreed to revert to this matter at its last regular meeting in 2023.

27.2. At the December meeting, the General Council again considered the exemption provided under paragraph 3 of GATT 1994 for review together with the annual reports provided by the United States in documents [WT/L/1165](#) and [WT/L/1178](#). The representatives of the United States; Japan; the European Union; Bangladesh; Norway; Panama; China and the Republic of Korea spoke. The United States intervened again. The General Council took note of the statements and also took note that the subsequent review under the two-yearly cycle provided in paragraph 3(b) of GATT 1994 would normally be held in 2025.

28 WAIVERS UNDER ARTICLE IX OF THE WTO AGREEMENT¹⁰⁵

28.1 Introduction of Harmonized System 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017 and 2022 Changes into WTO Schedules of Tariff Concessions – Draft Decisions ([WT/GC/M/208](#)¹⁰⁶)

28.1. At the December meeting, the General Council considered five draft waiver decisions, contained in [G/C/W/831](#), [G/C/W/832](#), [G/C/W/833](#), [G/C/W/834](#) and [G/C/W/835/Rev.1](#) which concerned the Introduction of Harmonized System 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017 and 2022 Changes into WTO Schedules of Tariff Concessions, respectively. The Chairperson of the Council for Trade in Goods reported on the consideration of this matter by that Council. The General Council took note of the report and, in accordance with the Decision-Making Procedures under Articles IX and XII of the WTO Agreement agreed in November 1995 ([WT/L/93](#)), adopted the five draft Decisions which were subsequently circulated in [WT/L/1181](#), [WT/L/1182](#), [WT/L/1183](#), [WT/L/1184](#) and [WT/L/1185](#).

28.2 Canada – Extension of the Waiver for the Caribbean Initiative: CARIBCAN – Draft Decision¹⁰⁷ ([WT/GC/M/204](#))

28.2. At the May meeting, the General Council agreed to extend the waiver until 31 December 2033.¹⁰⁸ The representatives of Antigua and Barbuda (OECS); Guyana (CARICOM); Trinidad and Tobago; Canada; Jamaica; and Barbados spoke. The General Council took note of the statements.

¹⁰² To be issued.

¹⁰³ To be issued.

¹⁰⁴ The Republic of Korea subsequently provided its statement, which has been reflected, as requested, in [WT/GC/M/203](#).

¹⁰⁵ In connection with this item, the attention of Members is drawn to the decision-making procedures under Articles IX and XII of the WTO Agreement agreed by the General Council on 15 November 1995 ([WT/L/93](#)).

¹⁰⁶ To be issued.

¹⁰⁷ [G/C/W/826](#)

¹⁰⁸ The decision was subsequently circulated in [WT/L/1166](#).

28.3 Review of Waivers Pursuant to Article IX:4 of the WTO Agreement ([WT/GC/M/205](#); [WT/GC/M/208](#)¹⁰⁹)

28.3. Under Article IX:4 of the WTO Agreement, "[a]ny waiver granted for a period of more than one year shall be reviewed by the Ministerial Conference not later than one year after it is granted, and thereafter annually until the waiver terminates."

28.4. At the July meeting, the General Council considered the following waivers for review under Article IX:4:

- a. Ministerial Decision on the TRIPS Agreement ([WT/MIN\(22\)/30](#) – [WT/L/1141](#))
- b. Least-Developed Country Members – Obligations under Article 70.8 and Article 70.9 of the TRIPS Agreement with respect to Pharmaceutical Products, granted on 30 November 2015 until 1 January 2033 ([WT/L/971](#))
- c. Kimberley Process Certification Scheme for Rough Diamonds, granted on 26 July 2018 through 31 December 2024 ([WT/L/1039](#))
- d. European Union – Application of autonomous preferential treatment to the Western Balkans – granted on 28 July 2021 until 31 December 2026 ([WT/L/1114](#), [WT/L/1169](#))

28.5. The GC Chairperson recalled that these had already been agreed by the General Council and the Ministerial Conference and were in force. She said that the General Council was not expected to take any new decision on their renewal or otherwise. The GC Chairperson noted that one of the waivers under review provided that an annual report should be submitted by the Members concerned. The relevant report from the European Union had been circulated in document [WT/L/1169](#). She also recalled that the review of the Ministerial Decision on the TRIPS Agreement, had already been taken up under item 3.C. The General Council took note of the statement and the report contained in document [WT/L/1169](#).

28.6. At the December meeting, the General Council considered the following waivers for review under Article IX:4:

- a. Preferential Treatment in Favour of Services and Service Suppliers of Least Developed Countries, granted on 17 December 2011 until 31 December 2030 ([WT/L/847](#), [WT/L/982](#))
- b. Preferential Tariff Treatment for Least-Developed Countries, granted on 16 October 2019 until 30 June 2029 ([WT/L/1069](#))
- c. Cuba – Article XV:6 – Extension of Waiver, granted on 23 November 2021 until 31 December 2026 ([WT/L/1128](#), [WT/L/1179](#))
- d. United States – African Growth and Opportunity Act, granted on 30 November 2015 until 30 September 2025 ([WT/L/970](#), [WT/L/1173](#))
- e. United States – Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act, granted on 16 October 2019 until 30 September 2025 ([WT/L/1070](#), [WT/L/1174](#))
- f. United States – Former Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, granted on 7 December 2016 until 31 December 2026 ([WT/L/1000](#), [WT/L/1175](#))
- g. United States – Trade Preferences granted to Nepal, granted on 7 December 2016 until 31 December 2025 ([WT/L/1001](#), [WT/L/1176](#))

28.7. The GC Chairperson stressed that these waivers had already been agreed by the General Council and were in force. She said that the General Council was not expected to take any new decision on their renewal or otherwise. The GC Chairperson noted that five of the waivers under

¹⁰⁹ To be issued.

review provided that an annual report should be submitted by the Members concerned. The reports from these Members had been circulated in documents [WT/L/1179](#) from Cuba, and [WT/L/1173](#), [WT/L/1174](#), [WT/L/1175](#) and [WT/L/1176](#) from the United States. The General Council took note of the statement and the reports contained in the mentioned documents. The representative of Guyana spoke.

29 WTO PENSION PLAN ([WT/GC/M/205](#))¹¹⁰

29.1 Election of Members and Alternates

29.2 Annual Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ending 31 December 2022

29.3 Report of the Independent External Auditor on the Audit of the Financial Statements of the World Trade Organization Pension Plan (WTOPP) for the Year Ended 31 December 2022

29.1. At the July meeting, the General Council agreed to elect the three representatives identified in her communication contained in [WT/GC/W/890](#) and to renew the terms of the other representatives that were able to continue serving on the WTO Pension Plan Management Board.

29.2. The General Council also took note of the "Annual Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ending 31 December 2022" ([WT/BFA/W/636](#) - [WT/L/1167](#)) and the "Report of the Independent External Auditor on the Audit of the Financial Statements of the WTOPP for the Financial Year Ended 31 December 2022" ([WT/BFA/W/637](#) - [WT/L/1168](#)).

30 INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTRE [UNCTAD/WTO](#) – REPORT OF THE JOINT ADVISORY GROUP ON ITS 57TH SESSION ([WT/GC/M/208](#)¹¹¹)

30.1. At the December meeting, the General Council considered a report of the Joint Advisory Group on the International Trade Centre [UNCTAD/WTO](#) on its Fifty-Seventh Session (ITC/AG(LVII)/292), which had been considered initially by the Committee on Trade and Development at its meeting on 17 November where it had been presented by the Chairperson of the Joint Advisory Group, Ambassador José R. Sanchez-Fung (Dominican Republic). The CTD Chairperson made a statement on the Committee's consideration of the report. The representatives of Barbados (CARICOM); the United Kingdom; Mauritius; China; the European Union; and Kazakhstan spoke. The General Council adopted the report of the Joint Advisory Group and took note of the CTD Chairperson's statement and of the other statements made. The Director-General also made a statement. Ms. Dorothy Tembo, Deputy Executive Director of the International Trade Centre (Observer), also made an intervention.

31 REVIEW OF WTO ACTIVITIES ([WT/GC/M/208](#)¹¹²)

31.1. At the December meeting, the General Council considered Annual Reports for 2023 from WTO bodies that had been drawn up in pursuance of the Decision concerning procedures for an annual overview of WTO activities and for reporting under the WTO in document [WT/L/105](#).

31.2. The General Council took note of the Chairperson's statement, adopted the report of the Committee on Trade and Development in document [WT/COMTD/103](#) and took note of the reports of other WTO bodies, including the reports of the bodies under the Plurilateral Trade Agreements, in documents [WT/DSB/85](#), [WT/TPR/509](#), [G/L/1524](#), [S/C/64](#), [IP/C/98](#), [WT/CTE/30](#), [WT/BOP/R/123](#), [WT/BFA/218](#), [WT/REG/34](#), [WT/WGTDF/22](#), [WT/WGTTT/25](#), [GPA/AR/6](#), and [WT/L/1177](#) – [TCA/21](#), and agreed to forward the reports to the Thirteenth Ministerial Conference. The General Council also adopted the draft Annual Report for 2023 of the General Council ([WT/GC/W/907](#)), on the understanding that the Secretariat would make the necessary adjustments to include matters

¹¹⁰ *Note:* At the December meeting, Item 8 contained in [WTO/AIR/GC/53](#) entitled "WTO Pension Plan – Amendment to the Regulations ([WT/GC/W/906](#))" was withdrawn from the agenda at the time of adopting the agenda.

¹¹¹ To be issued.

¹¹² To be issued.

considered at the December meeting, and agreed to forward it to the Thirteenth Ministerial Conference.

32 APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS TO WTO BODIES ([WT/GC/M/203](#) ; [WT/GC/M/208](#)¹¹³)

32.1. At the March meeting, the Chairperson recalled that in accordance with the Guidelines for Appointment of Officers to WTO Bodies ([WT/L/510](#)), and the related "practical steps" to improve their implementation ([JOB/GC/22](#)), he, together with the Chairperson of the Dispute Settlement Body, Ambassador Molokomme (Botswana), and the former Chairperson of the General Council, Ambassador Castillo (Honduras), had conducted consultations on a slate of names for the appointment of Chairpersons to WTO regular bodies listed in Groups 1, 2, 4 and 5 in the Annex to the Guidelines. He noted that they had consulted regularly and frequently with the coordinators of the four broad regional groups, namely: (i) Africa; (ii) Asia and the Pacific; (iii) developed countries; and (iv) Latin America and the Caribbean, and that they had also remained available throughout the process for any individual delegation wishing to consult with them.

32.2. In particular, they had met with group coordinators on multiple occasions, in December, January and February. To ensure transparency in this process, the Chairperson had sent communications to all delegations on 2 December, 19 January, 26 January and 14 February. In his communications, he had provided regular updates on the status of the consultations and the nominations or expressions of interests that they had received. The final communication had also included the draft, stabilized slate for Members' consideration. On 21 February, in line with the Guidelines, he had convened an Informal meeting of the General Council, where he had reported on the consultations and presented to Members the draft, stabilized slate that had emerged – as contained in his communication. No reservations to the names put forward had been received – indicating that there appeared to be consensus on the draft slate of names.

32.3. The full slate of names for the WTO regular bodies in Groups 1, 2, 4 and 5 resulting from the consultations read as followed:

General Council	H.E. Dr. Athaliah Lesiba Molokomme (Botswana)
Dispute Settlement Body	H.E. Mr. Petter Ølberg (Norway)
Trade Policy Review Body	H.E. Mr. Saqer Abdullah Almoqbel (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)
Council for Trade in Goods	H.E. Dr. Adamu Mohammed Abdulhamid (Nigeria)
Council for Trade in Services	Permanent Representative, Mrs. Tsvetelina Georgieva Dimitrova (Bulgaria)
Council for TRIPS	H.E. Mrs. Pimchanok Pitfield (Thailand)
Committee on Trade and Development	H.E. Dr. José Sánchez-Fung (Dominican Republic)
Committee on Balance-of-Payments Restrictions	H.E. Mr. Eheth Salomon (Cameroon)
Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration	H.E. Dr. Bettina Waldmann (Germany)
Committee on Trade and Environment	H.E. Mr. José Valencia (Ecuador)
Committee on Regional Trade Agreements	H.E. Ms. Clare Kelly (New Zealand)
Working Group on Trade, Debt and Finance	Mr. Felipe Llantada Soldi (Uruguay)
Working Group on Trade and Transfer of Technology	H.E. Mrs. Sofia Boza Martinez (Chile)

¹¹³ To be issued.

32.4. The General Council took note of the Chairperson's statement and of the consensus on the slate of names for the appointment of officers in the WTO bodies.

32.5. The Chairperson then recalled that, at the Informal meeting of the General Council on 21 February, he had also encouraged the CTG and CTS Chairpersons, as well as group coordinators and delegations, to already start undertaking all possible arrangements and preparations for the consultations for the chairpersonships for the subsidiary bodies of the Council for Trade in Goods and the Council for Trade in Services, so as to ensure a swift exercise. He also noted that Ambassador Kemvichet LONG (Cambodia), the outgoing Chairperson of the Council for Trade in Services, and Permanent Representative Mr. Etienne Oudot de Dainville (France), the outgoing Chairperson of the Council for Trade in Goods had already reached out to group coordinators to this end.

32.6. The Chairperson also informed the membership of some developments concerning the Chairpersonships of Accession Working Parties for which the respective Chairpersons had left Geneva.¹¹⁴ As announced at the regular meeting of the General Council in December, and in line with practice, he had asked Deputy Director-General Zhang to undertake the relevant consultations, on his behalf. Following these consultations, he understood that there was consensus on the appointment of the following Chairpersons:

Working Party on the Accession of Azerbaijan	H.E. Mr. Alparslan Acarsoy (Türkiye)
Working Party on the Accession of Bosnia and Herzegovina	H.E. Ms. Anita Pipan (Slovenia)
Working Party on the Accession of Curaçao	H.E. Mr. Matthew Wilson (Barbados)
Working Party on the Accession of Equatorial Guinea	H.E. Dr. José R. Sánchez-Fung (the Dominican Republic)
Working Party on the Accession of Ethiopia	H.E. Ms. Rebecca Fisher Lamb (United Kingdom)
Working Party on the Accession of Serbia	H.E. Ms. Margit Szűcs (Hungary)
Working Party on the Accession of Uzbekistan	H.E. Mr. Seong deok Yun (Republic of Korea)

32.7. The Chairperson also informed Members that the consultations on the Chairpersonships for the Working Parties on the Accessions of Bhutan and Iraq were still ongoing. He thanked Deputy Director-General Zhang for having undertaken these consultations on his behalf, thanked all new Chairpersons for their readiness and commitment in taking on these new roles and wished them success in their new endeavour.

32.8. The representatives of Peru; Mauritius; Kazakhstan; Canada; Honduras; Cameroon (African Group); Singapore; Kenya (ACP Group); the Russian Federation; China; South Africa; India; Japan; Türkiye; Tanzania; Bangladesh; Nepal; the United Kingdom; and Egypt paid tribute to the outgoing GC Chairperson¹¹⁵ for his extensive contributions to the WTO including to the successful Twelfth Ministerial Conference, and congratulated and welcomed the incoming GC Chairperson, as well as the other Chairpersons of WTO bodies.

32.9. The General Council took note of the statements.

32.10. At the December meeting, the Chairperson said that in accordance with the Guidelines for the Appointment of Officers to WTO bodies in document [WT/L/510](#) and the practical steps to improve the implementation of the Guidelines ([JOB/GC/22](#)), she initiated the 2024 selection process for the appointment of chairpersons to the WTO bodies in Groups 1, 2, 4 and 5 of the Annex to the Guidelines on 6 November 2023. In accordance with the Guidelines, she said that she was being assisted in the

¹¹⁴ For more accession-related discussions in the General Council in 2023, see further above and under "Other Business".

¹¹⁵ The European Union; the United States; Thailand; the United Kingdom; Panama, as well as the Director-General, paid tribute to the outgoing GC Chairperson under previous agenda items, as reflected in [WT/GC/M/203](#).

selection process by Ambassador Petter Ølberg (Norway), the serving Chairperson of the Dispute Settlement Body, and Ambassador Dacio Castillo (Honduras), former Chairperson of the General Council. She reported that Ambassador Ølberg, Ambassador Castillo and herself had already met with group coordinators on 9 November and 7 December 2023, and she was pleased to note that there appeared to be an emerging draft slate of names. She said that she would send a communication to all Members before the end-of-year break containing the draft slate of names and that an informal General Council meeting would be convened in early 2024 to finalize this housekeeping function to ensure a smooth conduct of WTO bodies in 2024. The General Council took note of the statement by the Chairperson.

32.11. Under this item, the GC Chairperson also informed Members that, following the consultations that Deputy Director-General Xiangchen Zhang had carried out on her behalf, she understood that there was consensus on the appointments of H.E. Ms. Nadia Theodore (Canada) as Chairperson of the Working Party on the Accession of The Bahamas; and of H.E. Ms. Nina Tornberg (Sweden) as Chairperson of the Working Party on the Accession of Somalia. The General Council took note of the statement.

33 ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON ([WT/GC/M/203](#))

33.1. At the March meeting, the GC Chairperson, H.E. Mr. Didier Chambovey (Switzerland), as the outgoing presiding officer of the General Council, made a statement. The General Council then unanimously elected H.E. Dr. Athaliah Lesiba Molokomme (Botswana) as Chairperson.

33.2. The Director-General and the newly elected Chairperson spoke. The General Council took note of the statements.¹¹⁶

34 OTHER BUSINESS

- Chairpersonships of the accession¹¹⁷ Working Parties of Bhutan and Iraq ([WT/GC/M/204](#))

34.1. At the May meeting, the GC Chairperson made an announcement, under Other Business, related to the Chairpersonships on the Working Parties on the Accessions of Bhutan and Iraq. The General Council took note of the statement.

- WTO Action to Assist Developing Countries and LDCs in Crisis Response – Request from Pakistan ([WT/GC/M/205](#))

34.2. At the July meeting, Pakistan introduced, under Other Business, a proposal "WTO Action to Assist Developing and LDCs in Crisis Response".¹¹⁸ The representatives of India; Argentina; Sri Lanka; the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela; Egypt; China; South Africa; the Plurinational State of Bolivia; Nepal; Indonesia; and Brazil spoke. The General Council took note of the statements.

- European Deforestation Regulation EUDR – Request by Honduras, on behalf of Argentina; Plurinational State of Bolivia; Brazil; Colombia, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay and Peru ([WT/GC/M/207](#))¹¹⁹

34.3. At the November meeting, Honduras, on behalf of Argentina, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay and Peru, made a statement, under Other Business, concerning the European Deforestation Regulation EUDR. The representatives of Argentina; Ecuador; Brazil; Thailand; Malaysia; Indonesia; Australia; Nigeria; and Canada spoke. Cameroon (African Group) made a statement on this matter at the time of the adoption of the agenda for the meeting. The General Council took note of the statements.

¹¹⁶ Zambia subsequently provided its statement, which has been reflected, as requested, in [WT/GC/M/203](#).

¹¹⁷ For more accession-related discussions in the General Council in 2023, see further above.

¹¹⁸ [JOB/GC/347](#)

¹¹⁹ To be issued.

- Administrative Measures for Members in Arrears ([WT/GC/M/203](#); [WT/GC/M/204](#); [WT/GC/M/205](#); [WT/GC/M/207](#); [WT/GC/M/208](#)¹²⁰)

34.4. In October 2012, the General Council approved a recommendation from the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration regarding revised Administrative Measures for Members in arrears, as contained in [WT/BFA/132](#), Annex I. These new revised Measures entered into force on 1 January 2013. These Measures required that at the end of each meeting of the General Council, the Chairperson of the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration should provide information with regard to which Members and Observers were under Administrative Measures; and, the General Council Chairperson would request Members and Observers in Categories II and III to inform the Secretariat as to when the payment of arrears might be expected.

34.5. At the General Council meetings in March, May, July, November and December, the Chairperson of the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration provided information, under Other Business, with regard to which Members were under Administrative Measures¹²¹ and the GC Chairperson requested Members and Observers in Categories II and III to inform the Secretariat as to when the payment of arrears might be expected. The General Council took note of the statements.

¹²⁰ To be issued.

¹²¹ [JOB/GC/339](#); [JOB/GC/343](#); [JOB/GC/354](#); [JOB/GC/370](#); [JOB/GC/379](#)