



**General Council
16-17 December 2020**

GENERAL COUNCIL

DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT (2020)¹

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 report², the General Council has held four regular meetings on 3 March, 29 May, 22-23 and 31 July, and 13 October, a special meeting on 15 May and a General Council meeting with the candidates in the Appointment Process for a new Director-General on 15-17 July.³ The minutes of these meetings, which remain in the record of the General Council's work, are contained in documents WT/GC/M/182, WT/GC/M/183 and WT/GC/M/183/Corr.1, WT/GC/M/184 and WT/GC/M/184/Corr.1, WT/GC/M/185, WT/GC/M/186 and WT/GC/M/187.

The following subjects are included in the report:

| | | |
|----------|---|----------|
| 1 | REPORTS ON INFORMAL TNC AND INFORMAL HODS MEETINGS | 2 |
| 2 | IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BALI, NAIROBI AND BUENOS AIRES OUTCOMES – STATEMENTS BY THE CHAIRPERSON | 4 |
| 3 | COVID-19 TRADE-RELATED MATTERS | 5 |
| 3.1 | Information Sharing and Exchange of Views on COVID-19 Trade-Related Measures | 5 |
| 3.2 | Joint Ministerial Statement on Action Plans to Facilitate the Flow of Goods and Services as well as the Essential Movement of People – Request by the Republic of Korea | 5 |
| 3.3 | Garments and Textile Sector in light of COVID-19 – Statement by Bangladesh | 6 |
| 3.4 | Discussions of the g7+ WTO Accessions Group on COVID-19 – Statement by Afghanistan | 6 |
| 3.5 | COVID-19 Initiative: Protecting Global Food Security Through Open Trade – Statement by Co-Sponsors of WT/GC/218/Rev.1 | 6 |
| 3.6 | APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade (MRT) Virtual Meeting Joint Statement 2020 – Request from Malaysia..... | 6 |
| 4 | WORK PROGRAMME ON ELECTRONIC COMMERCE | 6 |
| 4.1 | Work Programme on Electronic Commerce and Moratorium on Imposing Customs Duties on Electronic Transmissions – Request from India..... | 6 |
| 5 | WORK PROGRAMME ON SMALL ECONOMIES – REPORTS | 7 |
| 6 | ACCESSION MATTERS..... | 7 |
| 6.1 | 2019 Annual Report by the Director-General..... | 7 |
| 6.2 | Curaçao | 7 |

¹ The final version of the report will also reflect any further meeting of the General Council to be held in 2020 and items will be renumbered as necessary.

² The annual report of the General Council for 2019 was circulated in WT/GC/205.

³ A special meeting of the General Council was convened for 9 November (WTO/AIR/GC/33). The meeting was subsequently postponed until further notice (WTO/AIR/GC/33/Add.1). See also Footnote 30.

| | | |
|-----------|---|-----------|
| 6.3 | Somalia | 7 |
| 7 | OBSERVER STATUS..... | 8 |
| 7.1 | Turkmenistan..... | 8 |
| 8 | WAIVERS | 8 |
| 8.1 | Review of Waivers Pursuant to Article IX:4 of the WTO Agreement | 8 |
| 9 | TWELFTH SESSION OF THE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE..... | 8 |
| 9.1 | Statement by the Chairperson | 8 |
| 9.2 | Election of Officers..... | 9 |
| 9.3 | Request for Observer Status by Palestine | 9 |
| 9.4 | Launch of the MC12 Logo – Statement by Kazakhstan | 9 |
| 9.5 | Date and Venue | 9 |
| 10 | PROCEDURES TO STRENGTHEN THE NEGOTIATING FUNCTION OF THE WTO – STATEMENT BY THE UNITED STATES | 9 |
| 11 | PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES FOR WTO COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES ADDRESSING TRADE CONCERNS – COMMUNICATION FROM AND STATEMENT BY CO-SPONSORS | 10 |
| 12 | THE IMPORTANCE OF MARKET-ORIENTED CONDITIONS TO THE WORLD TRADING SYSTEM – COMMUNICATION FROM THE UNITED STATES AND JOINT STATEMENT BY BRAZIL, JAPAN AND THE UNITED STATES | 10 |
| 13 | UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE REPORT ON THE APPELLATE BODY OF THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION – STATEMENT BY THE UNITED STATES | 11 |
| 14 | KAZAKHSTAN – BORDER RESTRICTIONS OF GOODS IN TRANSIT – REQUEST FROM THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC | 11 |
| 15 | G20 TRADE AND INVESTMENT MINISTERIAL MEETING – STATEMENT BY THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA | 11 |
| 16 | ORIGIN MARKING REQUIREMENTS BY THE UNITED STATES – STATEMENT BY HONG KONG, CHINA..... | 11 |
| 17 | COMMITTEE ON BUDGET, FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION | 11 |
| 17.1 | Reports and Recommendations | 11 |
| 18 | WTO PENSION PLAN | 12 |
| 18.1 | Election of Chairperson, Members, and Alternates to the Management Board | 12 |
| 18.2 | Reports | 12 |
| 19 | ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES FOR MEMBERS IN ARREARS | 12 |
| 20 | APPOINTMENT OF THE NEXT DIRECTOR-GENERAL | 12 |
| 21 | DESIGNATION OF ACTING DIRECTOR-GENERAL | 13 |
| 22 | APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS TO WTO BODIES | 14 |
| 23 | ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON | 15 |

1 REPORTS ON INFORMAL TNC AND INFORMAL HODS MEETINGS (WT/GC/M/182; WT/GC/M/184; WT/GC/M/186 AND WT/GC/M/187)

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 meeting, the Chair recalled that the Director-General had convened Informal TNC and Informal Heads of Delegation meetings on 2 March where he had reported on relevant activities since his previous report and noted that, as per established practice, the Director-General's report, the reports of the Chairs of negotiating bodies, and the statements delivered by delegations would be included in the minutes of the March General Council meeting. The representatives of Costa Rica, Gabon and Côte d'Ivoire spoke. The General Council took note of the report of the Chairman of the TNC and of the Director-General's report⁴, and of the statements delivered at the Informal TNC and Informal HODs meetings on 2 March⁵ and by the delegations who took the floor under this item at the March General Council meeting.

1.3. At the May meeting, the Director-General, as Chairman of the TNC, provided his report on the TNC's activities since his last report to the Council, as well as on COVID-19 related matters and on his recent outreach activities. His full report can be found in document JOB/GC/231. The representatives of Chad (LDCs); Botswana (African Group); Burkina Faso (C-4 and the 36 African Country Cotton and Cotton Product Producers and/or Exporters); Costa Rica (Joint Initiative on Services Domestic Regulation); Panama; Uruguay (Informal Working Group on MSMEs); Australia (Joint Statement on E-Commerce); Saint Lucia (CARICOM); Jamaica (ACP); Indonesia; India; South Africa; Vanuatu (Pacific Group); the European Union; Guyana and Switzerland spoke. During its intervention, the representative of Indonesia referred to both items 1 and 2 of the May GC agenda.⁶ The General Council took note of the report of the Director-General and of the statements.⁷

1.4. At the July meeting, as it was his last General Council meeting, Director-General Roberto Azevêdo delivered a farewell statement to the General Council. The Director-General recalled his experience and the highlights during his seven-year tenure. He said that MC12 should deliver credible agreements and map the way for further reforms especially given the economic repercussions in the wake of COVID-19. His full statement can be found in JOB/GC/241.⁸

1.5. The Chairman followed by the representatives of Brazil; Guatemala (GRULAC); Thailand; Switzerland; Tanzania; Singapore; Barbados; Australia; China; Honduras; Egypt; Costa Rica; Ukraine; the European Union; Ecuador; Canada; the United Kingdom; Sri Lanka; Jamaica (ACP); the United States; North Macedonia; India; Tajikistan; Viet Nam (ASEAN); the Dominican Republic; Japan; Pakistan; Chad (LDCs and C-4); Botswana (African Group); the Russian Federation; Burkina Faso (LDCs and C-4); Côte d'Ivoire; Zimbabwe; the Republic of Korea; Turkey; Afghanistan; Nigeria; the Philippines; Senegal; Kenya; Nepal; Norway; Cambodia; Mozambique; Haiti; Israel; Chinese Taipei; Angola; Bangladesh; Vanuatu (Pacific Group); Uruguay; South Africa; Indonesia; Ghana; Iceland; Fiji; Albania; Namibia; Malaysia; Togo; Cameroon; New Zealand; Myanmar; Gabon; Paraguay; Qatar; Peru; Mexico; Colombia; Hong Kong, China; Liechtenstein; Georgia; Saint Lucia; Liberia; Zambia; The Gambia; Brunei Darussalam; the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Arab Group) and Kazakhstan bade farewell to DG Azevêdo and paid tribute to him for his leadership during his tenure as WTO Director-General. The General Council took note of the statements.

⁴ The Director-General's report and those of the Negotiating Group Chairs at the 2 March Informal TNC and Informal HODs Meetings are incorporated in the minutes of the March General Council meeting and are also circulated in document JOB/TNC/78.

⁵ The statements at the 2 March Informal TNC and Informal HODs Meetings by the following delegations are incorporated in the minutes of the March General Council meeting in WT/GC/M/182: Switzerland; Brazil; Botswana (African Group); Singapore; Chad (LDCs); European Union; Morocco; Canada (Ottawa Group); Angola; Iceland; Jamaica (ACP); Montenegro; China; Mexico; Japan; United States; New Zealand; Uruguay (Informal Working Group on MSMEs); India; Norway; Peru; Egypt (NFIDCs except Peru); Barbados (CARICOM); Afghanistan; Russian Federation; Malaysia; Republic of Korea; Turkey; Philippines; Costa Rica (Joint Initiative on Services Domestic Regulation); Nigeria; Argentina; South Africa; Pakistan; Thailand; Hong Kong, China; Indonesia; Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela; United Kingdom; Viet Nam (ASEAN); Nepal; Solomon Islands (Pacific Group); Australia (Joint Statement Initiative on Electronic Commerce); Cambodia; Panama (Article XII); Chinese Taipei; Burkina Faso (C-4); Saint Lucia (OECS); Ecuador; Chile (Structured Discussions on Investment Facilitation for Development) and Paraguay.

⁶ Item 1 of the May GC agenda related to the "*Report by the Chairman of the Trade Negotiations Committee and Report by the Director-General*" while Item 2 of the May GC agenda related to the "*Implementation of the Bali, Nairobi and Buenos Aires Outcomes – Statement by the Chairman*".

⁷ At the request of the delegations of Egypt and Gabon, their statements under this item are incorporated in the minutes of the May General Council meeting and can be found in Annex 1 of document WT/GC/M/184.

⁸ See also https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/spra_e/spra304_e.htm.

1.6. At the October meeting, the Chair recalled that on 12 October, the Informal TNC and Informal Heads of Delegation meetings had been convened by the four Deputy Directors-General in coordination with him as General Council Chair. The Deputy Directors-General and he had thought that during the interim period, it would be useful to have a "no surprises" approach, and that included continuing to provide the important usual transparency and inclusiveness in the HODs/TNCs – for Members to update each other on their activities and express views on the way forward ahead of the General Council meeting. Deputy Director-General Agah, representing all DDGs, chaired the meeting and had provided a report on recent activities. As per past practice, the report of Deputy Director-General Agah, representing all DDGs, the reports of the Chairs of negotiating bodies, and the statements delivered by delegations during the Informal TNC and Informal HODs meetings were included in the minutes of the October General Council meeting. The representative of Saint Lucia (CARICOM) spoke. The General Council took note of the report⁹ of Deputy Director-General Agah, representing all DDGs, on 12 October, and of the statement that day as well as those delivered at the 12 October Informal TNC and Informal HODs meetings.¹⁰

2 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BALI, NAIROBI AND BUENOS AIRES OUTCOMES – STATEMENTS BY THE CHAIRPERSON (WT/GC/M/182; WT/GC/M/184; WT/GC/M/186 AND WT/GC/M/187)

2.1. 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 Chair, 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.

2.2. At the General Council meetings in March, May, July and October, the Chair reported on the work taking place in WTO regular bodies to fulfil the Bali, Nairobi and Buenos Aires Ministerial mandates.¹¹

2.3. At the March meeting, the representatives of Chad (LDCs) and Barbados spoke. The General Council took note of the Chair's report and of the statement.

2.4. At the May meeting, the representatives of Chad (LDCs); Switzerland and the European Union spoke. The General Council took note of the Chairman's report and of the statements.

2.5. At the July meeting, the representatives of India; South Africa; Chad (LDCs); Botswana (African Group); Indonesia; Switzerland; the European Union; Sri Lanka and Namibia spoke. The General Council took note of the Chair's report and of the statements.

2.6. At the October meeting, the representatives of Chad (LDCs); the European Union; India and Indonesia spoke. The General Council took note of the Chair's report and of the statements.

⁹ Deputy Director-General Agah's report, representing all Deputy Directors-General, and the reports of the Chairs of Negotiating Bodies at the 12 October Informal TNC and Informal HODs Meetings are incorporated in the minutes of the October General Council meeting and are also circulated in document JOB/TNC/87.

¹⁰ The statements at the 12 October Informal TNC and Informal HODs Meetings by the following delegations are incorporated in the minutes of the October General Council meeting in WT/GC/M/187: Brazil; Chad (LDCs); China; Panama (Article XII Members); Egypt; European Union; Japan; Angola; Afghanistan; United States; Costa Rica (Joint Initiative on Services Domestic Regulation); Argentina; Iceland; Canada (Ottawa Group); Jamaica (ACP); Singapore; Australia (Joint Statement Initiative on Electronic Commerce); Botswana (African Group); India; Montenegro; Turkey; Saint Lucia (CARICOM); Philippines; Thailand; New Zealand; Mexico; Republic of Korea; Chinese Taipei; Chile (Structured Discussions on Investment Facilitation for Development); Switzerland; South Africa; Indonesia (G-33); Norway; Hong Kong, China; Uruguay (Informal Working Group on MSMEs); Nigeria; Malaysia; Qatar; Ecuador; Colombia; Namibia; Pakistan; Burkina Faso (C-4); United Kingdom; Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela; Sri Lanka and Peru. At its request, the statement of Barbados on this matter is likewise incorporated in the minutes of the October General Council meeting and can be found in Annex 2 of document WT/GC/M/187 together with the above-mentioned statements.

¹¹ The Chairman's statements were subsequently circulated in JOB/GC/226, JOB/GC/232, JOB/GC/242 and JOB/GC/246.

3 COVID-19 TRADE-RELATED MATTERS

3.1 Information Sharing and Exchange of Views on COVID-19 Trade-Related Measures (WT/GC/M/183 and WT/GC/M/183/Corr.1)

3.1. The special General Council meeting held in virtual format on 15 May provided a forum for Members to share information and exchange views on COVID-19 trade-related measures. It was the first time that a Special General Council meeting was convened to discuss the trade policy aspects and effects of a global crisis and that a formal WTO meeting was held in virtual format. The Chair highlighted the economic dimensions of the COVID-19 crisis and that trade, or the lack of it, could variously contribute to ameliorating problems or to aggravating the challenges – in both the immediate and longer term. He noted the various initiatives of the WTO in response to the crisis, including the guidance joint statements issued by the Director-General and the monitoring and reporting work of the Secretariat and stressed that Members had been issuing joint political statements calling for keeping markets open; ensuring the free flow of trade in essential medical goods, agricultural and food products; minimising disruptions in supply chains; and for response measures to be transparent, temporary and proportionate, without creating unnecessary barriers to trade. His full statement was circulated in document JOB/GC/228. The Director-General also made a statement on this matter which was subsequently circulated in document JOB/GC/229.

3.2. The representatives of Uruguay; Switzerland; Morocco; Jamaica (ACP); Guyana; Saint Lucia (CARICOM); Israel; Botswana (African Group); Montenegro; New Zealand; Argentina (Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay and Uruguay); North Macedonia; the Republic of Korea; the United Kingdom; the Dominican Republic (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama); the Philippines; Tajikistan; Australia; Mexico; Nigeria; Albania; Paraguay; Japan; Namibia; Brazil; Chile; Colombia; the European Union; Barbados; Egypt; Singapore; Norway; Peru; Sri Lanka; Afghanistan; the Republic of Moldova; Costa Rica; the Russian Federation; Hong Kong, China; Oman; Benin; the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; China; the United States; Ecuador; Turkey; Tunisia; Thailand; Canada; Chinese Taipei; Malaysia; India; Indonesia; South Africa; Myanmar; Fiji (Pacific Group); Ukraine; Viet Nam (ASEAN); Cambodia; Burkina Faso (C-4, LDCs and the 36 African Country Cotton and Cotton Product Producers and/or Exporters); the Maldives; Zimbabwe; Bahamas (Observer); Belarus (Observer) and Uzbekistan (Observer) spoke.¹²

3.3. In the course of the meeting, delegations referred to several relevant communications including: (a) G20 Trade and Investment Ministerial Statement (WT/L/1089); (b) Declaration on Trade in Essential Goods for Combating the COVID-19 Pandemic (G/C/W/777); (c) Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic with Open and Predictable Trade in Agricultural and Food Products (WT/GC/208 and WT/GC/208/Rev.1 and WT/GC/208/Rev.2); (d) COVID-19: Actions to be Considered during Confinement and after Reopening of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Facilities (RD/GC/13 – RD/TNC/2); (e) ASEAN Declaration and Statements on COVID-19 (WT/GC/210); (f) Securing LDCs' Emergency Access to Essential Medical and Food Products to combat the COVID-19 Pandemic (WT/GC/211); (g) Statement on COVID-19 And the Multilateral Trading System by Ministers Responsible for the WTO from Co-Sponsors (WT/GC/212 and Rev.1 and Rev.2); (h) Statement on COVID-19 by APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade (WT/GC/213) (i) Joint Ministerial Statement on COVID-19 (WT/GC/214); (j) Statement on Highlighting the Importance of MSMEs in the time of COVID-19 (WT/GC/215 and Rev.1); (k) G20 Trade and Investment Ministerial Meeting Ministerial Statement (WT/GC/216).

3.4. The General Council took note of the statements.

3.2 Joint Ministerial Statement on Action Plans to Facilitate the Flow of Goods and Services as well as the Essential Movement of People – Request by the Republic of Korea (WT/GC/M/184)

3.5. At the May meeting, the representative of the Republic of Korea presented the Joint Ministerial Statement circulated in WT/GC/214 and co-sponsored by Australia, Canada, New Zealand and Singapore. The representatives of Chad (LDCs); New Zealand, Australia; Singapore; Kenya; Chinese Taipei; South Africa; India; Canada; the European Union; Afghanistan and Chile spoke. During their

¹² At their request, the statements of Chad (LDCs) and of Libya (Observer) are incorporated in the minutes of the 15 May meeting and can be found in the annex of document WT/GC/M/183.

respective interventions, Kenya and Chile referred to items 5 and 6 of the May GC agenda.¹³ The representative of the Republic of Korea again took the floor. The General Council took note of the statements.

3.3 Garments and Textile Sector in light of COVID-19 – Statement by Bangladesh (WT/GC/M/184)

3.6. At the May¹⁴ meeting, the representative of Bangladesh made a statement on the impact of the behaviour of businesses in light of COVID-19, in particular in the garments manufacturing sector and requested that an event be organised to discuss this matter. The General Council took note of the statement.

3.4 Discussions of the g7+ WTO Accessions Group on COVID-19 – Statement by Afghanistan (WT/GC/M/184)

3.7. At the May¹⁵ meeting, the representative of Afghanistan provided an update on the discussions of the g7+ WTO Accessions Group on COVID-19 where they called on all Members to consider the challenges they faced and to support them in curbing the pandemic and facilitating their economic recovery and resilience. The General Council took note of the statement.

3.5 COVID-19 Initiative: Protecting Global Food Security Through Open Trade – Statement by Co-Sponsors of WT/GC/218/Rev.1 (WT/GC/M/186)

3.8. At the July meeting, the representative of Australia presented the revised communication in document WT/GC/218/Rev.1, on behalf of the co-sponsors, seeking to limit the impacts of COVID-19 by reinforcing the importance of open markets, maintaining global supply chains and transparency. The representatives of Costa Rica; Canada; Argentina; Uruguay; Brazil; Peru; Paraguay; New Zealand; Japan; Chile; the United States; Singapore; Ukraine; China; the United Kingdom; Nigeria; the European Union; the Russian Federation; Pakistan; Qatar; Botswana (African Group); Jamaica (ACP); Chad (LDCs); South Africa; India; Indonesia and Malaysia spoke. During its intervention, Botswana referred to the African Group Statement on the Implications of COVID-19 in document WT/GC/219 – TN/C/20. The General Council took note of the statements.

3.6 APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade (MRT) Virtual Meeting Joint Statement 2020 – Request from Malaysia (WT/GC/M/187)

3.9. At the October meeting, the representative of Malaysia presented the communication in WT/GC/220. The representatives of Australia; Chile; the United States; Canada; the Philippines; Viet Nam (ASEAN) and Japan spoke. The General Council took note of the statements.

4 WORK PROGRAMME ON ELECTRONIC COMMERCE¹⁶

4.1 Work Programme on Electronic Commerce and Moratorium on Imposing Customs Duties on Electronic Transmissions – Request from India (WT/GC/M/187)

4.1. At the October meeting, the representative of India made a statement stressing the importance of discussions under the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce and on the moratorium. The representatives of South Africa; Indonesia; Nigeria; Australia; Botswana (African Group); Bangladesh; Jamaica (ACP); Namibia; Saint Lucia (CARICOM); the United Kingdom; Turkey; the United States; Mali; Mexico; Canada; Switzerland; Israel; Singapore; Japan; Sri Lanka; the European Union; Pakistan; Chad (LDCs) and Chile spoke. India again took the floor. The General Council took note of the statements.

¹³ Item 5 of the May GC agenda related to the "Process of Appointment of the next Director-General – Statement by the Chairman "; Item 6 of the May GC agenda related to the " Joint Ministerial Statement on Action Plans to Facilitate the Flow of Goods and Services as well as the Essential Movement of People – Request by the Republic of Korea".

¹⁴ This statement was made under "Other Business" at the 29 May meeting.

¹⁵ This statement was made under "Other Business" at the 29 May meeting.

¹⁶ See also Paragraph 2.2 and Footnote 11.

5 WORK PROGRAMME ON SMALL ECONOMIES – REPORTS (WT/GC/M/182; WT/GC/M/184; WT/GC/M/186 AND WT/GC/M/187)

5.1. At the March meeting, the CTD Chairman reported that the proposed text for a Ministerial Decision on Small Economies was still under consideration and that there was no objection to proceed with a proposed seminar on the opportunities and challenges for small economies in attracting investments. The representatives of El Salvador (SVEs) and Barbados spoke. The General Council took note of the CTD Chairman's report and of the statements.

5.2. At the May meeting, the CTD Chairman reported that due to COVID-19, the dedicated session scheduled on 26 March was postponed – which could have been used to agree on a text for an MC12 Ministerial Decision on the Work Programme of Small Economies. As MC12 had also been postponed, the CTD Chair would discuss with the SVEs Group regarding the way forward. The representatives of Vanuatu (Pacific Group); Mauritius; Saint Lucia (CARICOM); El Salvador (SVEs) and Barbados spoke. The General Council took note of the CTD Chairman's report and of the statements.

5.3. At the July meeting, the CTD Chairman reported that he had reached out to the SVEs and other delegations and planned to convene a meeting after the summer break to discuss relevant issues. He noted the suggestions by delegations to include topics such as the impact of COVID-19 on trade in small economies and on attracting investments. The representatives of Guatemala (SVEs), Fiji, Saint Lucia (CARICOM), Vanuatu (Pacific Group), Sri Lanka, Burkina Faso (C-4) and Barbados spoke. The General Council took note of the CTD Chairman's report and of the statements.

5.4. At the October meeting, the CTD Chairman reported that he had reached out to the SVEs and other delegations and planned to convene a meeting after the summer break to discuss relevant issues. Delegations suggested topics such as the impact of COVID-19 on the trade of small economies and attracting investments in small economies. The representatives of Barbados; Guatemala (SVEs); Sri Lanka; Ecuador; Saint Lucia (CARICOM); Mauritius; the Republic of Korea and Fiji (Pacific Group) spoke. The General Council took note of the CTD Chairman's report and of the statements.

6 ACCESSION MATTERS

6.1 2019 Annual Report by the Director-General (WT/GC/M/182)

6.1. At the March meeting, the Director-General presented the 2019 Annual Report on WTO Accessions (WT/ACC/36 – WT/GC/207) and highlighted that 2019 was another busy year for WTO accessions with 14 out of the 22 ongoing accessions being in the "active" category. The representatives of Panama (Article XII Members); Afghanistan; Chad (LDCs); the United States; Uruguay; Botswana (African Group); South Africa; Turkey; the United Kingdom; Benin; Oman; Qatar; Somalia (Observer) and Ethiopia (Observer) spoke. The General Council took note of the Director-General's report and of the statements.

6.2 Curaçao (WT/GC/M/182)

6.2. At the March meeting, the General Council agreed to establish the Working Party to examine the request for accession of Curaçao in document WT/ACC/CUW/1, with standard terms of reference and composition as the Chair read out in the meeting. Mr. Caryl Monte, President of the Permanent Commission for International Trade and Foreign Economic Relations and Chief Negotiator of Curaçao (Observer) and the representatives of the Kingdom of the Netherlands; Panama (Article XII Members); the European Union; Saint Lucia (OECS); Barbados; the United Kingdom; Jamaica and the Dominican Republic spoke. The General Council took note of the statements.

6.3 Somalia (WT/GC/M/187)

6.3. At the October¹⁷ meeting, the Chair announced that, following a process of consultations conducted by Deputy Director-General Wolff, there was consensus on the appointment of

¹⁷ This item was taken up under "Other Business" at the October meeting.

Ambassador Mikael Anzén (Sweden) as Chairman of the Working Party on the Accession of Somalia. The General Council took note of the statement.

7 OBSERVER STATUS

7.1 Turkmenistan (WT/GC/M/184 and WT/GC/M/186)

7.1. At the May¹⁸ meeting, the Chair announced that he would begin consultations on Turkmenistan's request for observer status (WT/L/1090). The General Council took note¹⁹ of the Chairman's statement.

7.2. At the July meeting, the Chair reported that, further to subsequent engagement with a number of delegations, he had sent a communication on 25 June to suggest that, if no objections or reservations had been received by 3 July, the General Council would consider the request for observer status at its next regular meeting. As he had not received any objections, he understood that the General Council could be in a position to take action on the matter. He therefore proposed that the General Council agreed to the request to grant Turkmenistan Observer Status. The General Council so agreed. H.E. Atageldi Haljanov, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Turkmenistan in Geneva (Observer) and the representatives of Afghanistan, Panama (Article XII Members), Mongolia (LLDCs), Tajikistan, Ukraine, Turkey, India, the Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation, Paraguay and Pakistan spoke. Turkmenistan (Observer) again took the floor. The General Council took note of the statements.

8 WAIVERS

8.1 Review of Waivers Pursuant to Article IX:4 of the WTO Agreement (WT/GC/M/186)

8.1. 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."

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

- a. 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)
- b. Kimberley Process Certification Scheme for Rough Diamonds, granted on 26 July 2018 through 31 December 2024 (WT/L/1039)
- c. Canada – CARIBCAN, granted on 28 July 2015 until 31 December 2023 (WT/L/958, WT/L/1091)

8.3. In doing so, the General Council considered a report on implementation of the respective waiver in document WT/L/1091. The representatives of Chad (LDCs), Canada, Jamaica, Saint Lucia (CARICOM) and the European Union spoke. The General Council took note of the report contained in document WT/L/1091 and of the statements.

9 TWELFTH SESSION OF THE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

9.1 Statement by the Chairperson (WT/GC/M/182)

9.1. At the March meeting, the Chair made a statement on the Annual Reports to be transmitted to Ministers at MC12 and on a possible outcome document. The representative of Barbados spoke. The General Council took note of the statements.

¹⁸ This item was taken up under "Other Business" at the May meeting.

¹⁹ At the request of the delegation of Afghanistan, its statement under this item is incorporated in the minutes of the May meeting and can be found in Annex 2 of document WT/GC/M/184.

9.2 Election of Officers (WT/GC/M/182)

9.2. At the March meeting, the General Council agreed to elect the following Vice-Chairs for MC12: H.E. Ms Amelia Kyambadde (Uganda), H.E. Mr Jerome Walcott (Barbados) and H.E. Mr Simon Birmingham (Australia).

9.3 Request for Observer Status by Palestine (WT/GC/M/182)

9.3. At the March meeting, the General Council agreed to grant Palestine Observer Status at MC12 on an ad hoc basis.

9.4 Launch of the MC12 Logo – Statement by Kazakhstan (WT/GC/M/182)

9.4. At the March meeting, the representative of Kazakhstan launched the logo of the Twelfth Session of the Ministerial Conference, as part of the preparations for MC12. The Chair and the representative of Kazakhstan spoke. The General Council took note of the statements.

9.5 Date and Venue (WT/GC/M/184; WT/GC/M/186 and WT/GC/M/187)

9.5. At the May meeting, the Chair reported on the consultations the Director-General and he had conducted in light of the postponement of MC12 in Nur-Sultan on 8-11 June 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and further to the communication Kazakhstan had circulated in document WT/GC/209 confirming that it remained ready to host MC12 in June 2021 in Nur-Sultan. The representatives of Thailand; Botswana (African Group); Jamaica (ACP); Paraguay; Brazil; Viet Nam (ASEAN); the Republic of Korea; Hong Kong, China; Barbados; Tanzania; the Russian Federation; the Dominican Republic; India; Chinese Taipei; Ecuador; Cameroon; the European Union; Nigeria; Afghanistan; Singapore and Kazakhstan spoke. During their respective interventions, Thailand; Jamaica (ACP); Paraguay; Viet Nam (ASEAN); Tanzania; Ecuador and Afghanistan referred to both items 4 and 5 of the May GC agenda²⁰ and Viet Nam (ASEAN) also referred to item 2 of the May GC agenda.²¹ The General Council took note of the Chairman's report and of the statements.

9.6. At the July meeting, the Chair reported that concerns on uncertainties brought about by the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic had remained and that several delegations remained of the view that any date set would necessarily need to be considered as a "working hypothesis". Therefore, the third week of June 2021 – 21 to 24 June – remained as a "working hypothesis", and the General Council would take a formal decision at the appropriate time. The representatives of Brazil; Thailand; Afghanistan; Paraguay; Namibia; Viet Nam (ASEAN); the Republic of Korea; India; the United Kingdom; Botswana (African Group); Peru; South Africa; the Russian Federation; Burkina Faso (C-4); Cambodia; the European Union; Nigeria; Jamaica; Japan; Cameroon; Ecuador and Kazakhstan spoke. The General Council took note of the Chairman's report and of the statements.

9.7. At the October meeting, the Chair noted that, given the uncertainties caused by COVID-19, the "working hypothesis" continued to be that the Conference would take place in the third week of June 2021 – specifically from 21 to 24 June. He invited all Members to stay constructively engaged on the matter so that the General Council could take a formal decision as soon as feasible. The representatives of Brazil; Botswana (African Group); the Dominican Republic; the United Kingdom; Namibia; South Africa; Viet Nam (ASEAN); the Russian Federation; the Philippines; India; Afghanistan; Malaysia; Chad (LDCs) and Kazakhstan spoke. The General Council took note of the Chairman's report and of the statements.

10 PROCEDURES TO STRENGTHEN THE NEGOTIATING FUNCTION OF THE WTO – STATEMENT BY THE UNITED STATES (WT/GC/M/182; WT/GC/M/186 AND WT/GC/M/187)

10.1. At the March meeting, the United States introduced the item including the communications in documents WT/GC/W/757/Rev.1 and WT/GC/W/764/Rev.1. The representatives of the European

²⁰ Item 4 of the May GC agenda related to the "Twelfth Session of the Ministerial Conference – Date and Venue – Statement by the Chairman" while Item 5 of the May GC agenda related to the "Process of Appointment of the next Director-General – Statement by the Chairman".

²¹ Item 2 of the May GC agenda related to the "Implementation of the Bali, Nairobi and Buenos Aires Outcomes – Statement by the Chairman".

Union; Australia; Colombia; China; Chad (LDCs); Barbados; India; Saint Lucia (OECS); South Africa; Indonesia; Jamaica (ACP); Thailand; Sri Lanka and Namibia spoke. The representative of the United States again took the floor. The General Council took note of the statements.

10.2. At the July meeting, the United States made a statement on this matter referring to its communications in documents WT/GC/W/757/Rev.1 and WT/GC/W/764/Rev.1. The representatives of Brazil; China; Australia; the European Union; Chad (LDCs); India; Colombia; the Russian Federation; South Africa; Jamaica (ACP); Japan; Turkey; Mexico and Cameroon spoke. The United States again took the floor. The General Council took note of the statements.

10.3. At the October meeting, the United States made a statement under this item referring to its communications in documents WT/GC/W/757/Rev.1 and WT/GC/W/764/Rev.1. The representatives of Brazil; the European Union; the Russian Federation; Botswana (African Group); South Africa; Saint Lucia (CARICOM); Australia; Namibia; Chad (LDCs); Norway; China; Jamaica (ACP); Indonesia; Barbados; Japan; India; Turkey and Pakistan spoke. The United States again took the floor. The General Council took note of the statements.

11 PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES FOR WTO COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES ADDRESSING TRADE CONCERNS – COMMUNICATION FROM AND STATEMENT BY CO-SPONSORS (WT/GC/M/182; WT/GC/M/186 AND WT/GC/M/187)

11.1. At the March meeting, the representative of the European Union, on behalf of the co-sponsors, introduced the revised proposal in document WT/GC/W/777/Rev.5. The representatives of Canada; China; Hong Kong, China; Switzerland; Chinese Taipei; Chad (LDCs); the United Kingdom; Bangladesh; Paraguay; the United States; India; Indonesia; South Africa and Ecuador spoke. The European Union again took the floor. The General Council took note of the statements.

11.2. At the July meeting, the representative of the European Union, on behalf of the co-sponsors, made a statement on the revised proposal in document WT/GC/W/777/Rev.5. The representatives of Norway; Uruguay; the United States; India; Brazil; Chad (LDCs); Turkey; Chinese Taipei; Hong Kong, China; Nigeria; South Africa; Bangladesh and Mexico spoke. The European Union again took the floor. The General Council took note of the statements.

11.3. At the October meeting, the representative of the European Union, on behalf of the co-sponsors, made a statement on the revised proposal in document WT/GC/W/777/Rev.5. The representatives of India; South Africa; the United Kingdom; Chad (LDCs); Mexico; Indonesia; Thailand; Bangladesh and Chinese Taipei spoke. The European Union again took the floor. The General Council took note of the statements.

12 THE IMPORTANCE OF MARKET-ORIENTED CONDITIONS TO THE WORLD TRADING SYSTEM – COMMUNICATION FROM THE UNITED STATES AND JOINT STATEMENT BY BRAZIL, JAPAN AND THE UNITED STATES (WT/GC/M/182; WT/GC/M/186 AND WT/GC/M/187)

12.1. At the March meeting, the representative of the United States introduced the item including its communication in document WT/GC/W/796. The representatives of Canada; Japan; Brazil; Colombia; Chinese Taipei; Nigeria; Australia; the European Union; South Africa; Uruguay; Indonesia; the United Kingdom; Norway; Pakistan; the Russian Federation; Sri Lanka; India; Mexico; Switzerland and China spoke. The United States and China again took the floor. The General Council took note of the statements.

12.2. At the July meeting, the representatives of the United States and Brazil presented their Joint Statement on the "Importance of Market-Oriented Conditions to the World Trading System" circulated in document WT/GC/W/803. The representatives of China; Australia; Nigeria; the European Union; Norway; Switzerland; the United Kingdom; the Russian Federation; Chinese Taipei; Paraguay; South Africa; Canada; India; Japan and Burking Faso spoke. The United States and Brazil again took the floor. The General Council took note of the statements.

12.3. At the October meeting, the representatives of the United States, Brazil and Japan presented their revised joint statement circulated in document WT/GC/W/803/Rev.1. The representatives of South Africa; the European Union; the United Kingdom; the Philippines; Nigeria; Switzerland; the

Russian Federation; Norway; Mexico; Canada; Chinese Taipei; India; Australia; Pakistan; Colombia and China spoke. The United States again took the floor. The General Council took note of the statements.

13 UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE REPORT ON THE APPELLATE BODY OF THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION – STATEMENT BY THE UNITED STATES (WT/GC/M/182)

13.1. At the March meeting, the representative of the United States introduced the item. The representatives of Chad (LDCs); Canada; Benin; Thailand; the Philippines; China; Argentina; the European Union; India; Barbados; Switzerland; Jamaica (ACP); the Russian Federation; Japan; Botswana (African Group); South Africa; Australia; Mexico and Indonesia spoke. The General Council took note of the statements.

14 KAZAKHSTAN – BORDER RESTRICTIONS OF GOODS IN TRANSIT – REQUEST FROM THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC (WT/GC/M/182)

14.1. At the March meeting, the representative of the Kyrgyz Republic introduced the item including its communication in document G/C/W/774 – G/TFA/W/20 and G/C/W/774/Add.1 – G/TFA/W/20/Add.1. The representative of Kazakhstan spoke. The representatives of the Kyrgyz Republic and Kazakhstan took the floor again. The representatives of Japan and the Republic of Moldova spoke. The General Council took note of the statements.

15 G20 TRADE AND INVESTMENT MINISTERIAL MEETING – STATEMENT BY THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA (WT/GC/M/187)

15.1. At the October²² meeting, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia presented the Communiqué from the G20 Trade and Investment Ministerial Meeting circulated in document WT/GC/221. The General Council took note of the statement.

16 ORIGIN MARKING REQUIREMENTS BY THE UNITED STATES – STATEMENT BY HONG KONG, CHINA (WT/GC/M/187)

16.1. At the October²³ meeting, the representative of Hong Kong, China raised concerns on the "Origin Marking Requirement by the United States" – a revised requirement from the United States for all goods produced in Hong Kong, China and destined to the United States be marked to indicate "China" as their origin. The representative of the United States spoke. The General Council took note of the statements.

17 COMMITTEE ON BUDGET, FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

17.1 Reports and Recommendations (WT/GC/M/186 and WT/GC/M/187)

17.1. At the July meeting, the CBFA Chairman introduced the report of the CBFA in document WT/BFA/185/Rev.1 including the Committee's recommendations. The General Council took note of the CBFA Chairman's statement, approved the Budget Committee's specific recommendation in paragraph 7.19 of WT/BFA/185/Rev.1, and adopted the report.

17.2. At the October meeting, the CBFA Chairman introduced the reports of the CBFA in documents WT/BFA/186, WT/BFA/187 and WT/BFA/188 including the Committee's recommendations. The General Council approved the Budget Committee's specific recommendations in paragraph 2.49 of WT/BFA/188 concerning transfers between budgetary sections and the WTO Audited Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2019 and in paragraph 4.3 of WT/BFA/188 concerning the budgetary surplus; took note of the CBFA Chairman's statement concerning the WTO budget proposal; approved paragraph 5.5 of WT/BFA/188 concerning the suspension of Administrative Measures for Niger; adopted the reports in WT/BFA/186, WT/BFA/187 and WT/BFA/188 and took note of the statements. The representatives of India and Chad (LDCs) spoke. At its request, the

²² This item was taken up under "Other Business" at the October meeting.

²³ This item was taken up under "Other Business" at the October meeting.

statement of the delegation of Niger under this agenda item was incorporated in the Minutes of the October General Council meeting. The General Council took note of the statements.²⁴

18 WTO PENSION PLAN

18.1 Election of Chairperson, Members, and Alternates to the Management Board (WT/GC/M/186)

18.1. Article 4(a) of the Regulations of the WTO Pension Plan provides, *inter alia*, for the election by the General Council of a Chairperson, four members and four alternates to the Management Board of the Pension Plan, each for a three-year term.

18.2. At the July meeting, the Chair recalled that the term of office of the current membership of the Management Board had been due for renewal and that a process of consultations had been undertaken regarding this which was announced through communications sent to delegations in May, June and July. On the basis of this process, the Chairman suggested that the slate of candidates in document WT/GC/W/801 be elected to the Management Board. The General Council so agreed. The decision was subsequently circulated in WT/L/1092.

18.2 Reports (WT/GC/M/187)

18.3. At the October meeting, the Chairman of the WTOPP Management Board presented to the General Council the 2019 Report of the External Auditor and the 2019 Annual Report of the World Trade Organization Pension Plan which could be found in documents WT/L/1093 and WT/L/1094. The General Council took note of the reports and of the WTOPP Management Board Chairman's statement.

19 ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES FOR MEMBERS IN ARREARS (WT/GC/M/182; WT/GC/M/184; WT/GC/M/186 AND WT/GC/M/187)

19.1. 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.

19.2. At the General Council meetings in March, May, July and October²⁵, the Chairman of the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration provided information with regard to which Members were under Administrative Measures and the Chairman made the said request to Members and Observers in Categories II and III. The representative of the United States spoke at the July meeting; the representative of Cuba spoke at the October meeting. The General Council took note of the statements.

20 APPOINTMENT OF THE NEXT DIRECTOR-GENERAL (WT/GC/M/184; WT/GC/M/185 AND WT/GC/M/186)

20.1. At the May meeting, the Chair said that following the announcement made by the Director-General on 14 May that he would step down on 31 August 2020, after consulting with Members and in accordance with the relevant Procedures for the Appointment of Directors-General adopted by the General Council in 2002 (WT/L/509), he initiated the process for the appointment of a new Director-General. In this regard, in line with the Procedures, the Chair had formally notified Members (JOB/GC/230) of the start of the process. Phase One would involve the nomination period; Phase Two would provide candidates the opportunity to present themselves to Members and Phase Three

²⁴ Under this item, the General Council also took up the matter concerning "Administrative Measures for Members in Arrears" where the delegation of Cuba intervened. See Paragraphs 19.1 and 19.2 of this report.

²⁵ This item was taken up under "Other Business" at the March, May and July meetings. At the October meeting, this matter was taken up under Item 11 of the October GC agenda entitled "Committee On Budget, Finance and Administration – Reports on Meetings of June, July and September 2020".

would be devoted to selecting and appointing one of the candidates through consultations with Members. In this Phase, in line with the Procedures, the General Council Chair would be assisted by the Chairpersons of the Dispute Settlement Body and the Trade Policy Review Body. As for the duration of Phase Two and Phase Three, he noted that, in line with Paragraph 23 of the Procedures, in the event of a vacancy in the post, the General Council Chairman could establish expedited deadlines in consultation with Members as necessary. He would be consulting with Members on the matter with a view to establishing expedited deadlines. The representatives of Botswana (African Group); Mongolia (Asian Group of Developing Countries); Brazil; the Dominican Republic; Chinese Taipei; Cameroon; Turkey; Zimbabwe; Saint Lucia (CARICOM); Chad (LDCs); India; Canada; Egypt; Nigeria; Cambodia; South Africa; the European Union; the United Kingdom and Tunisia spoke. During their respective interventions, the representatives of Turkey; Cambodia; South Africa and Tunisia referred to both items 4 and 5 of the May GC agenda.²⁶ The General Council took note of the Chairman's report and of the statements.

20.2. At the General Council meeting with the candidates on 15-17 July, the Chair recalled that the nomination period had closed on 8 July and a consolidated list²⁷ of candidates had been circulated on 9 July. Pursuant to paragraph 14 of the Procedures in WT/L/509, Members then met formally²⁸ with each of the eight candidates nominated²⁹ for the post of the next Director-General, on the basis of modalities for the conduct of the meeting communicated to all delegations on 1 and 10 July which were recalled by the Chairman at the beginning of the meeting.

20.3. At the July meeting, the Chair noted that, further to the consultations undertaken on expediting deadlines, the duration of Phase Two – period for the candidates to make themselves known to Members – could be shortened from three to two months. On that basis, Phase Three – period of consultations to narrow the field of candidates and ultimately to arrive at its choice for appointment – would start on 7 September. He gave an overview of how Phase Three was organised in the previous appointment process in 2013 and highlighted a number of elements, in particular the number of rounds of consultations that took place; the number of candidates that remained at the end of each round; the question asked and the modalities for the consultations. He in consultation with the Facilitators would be engaging with Members, including through an open-ended Informal Meeting, with the intention that before the end of the month, the modalities for the organization and conduct of Phase Three would be known to all Members and all candidates.³⁰ The representatives of the Philippines, the United Kingdom, Nigeria, India, Kenya, Botswana (African Group), Indonesia, Haiti, South Africa, Brazil, Egypt, Chad (LDCs) and Jamaica spoke. During their respective interventions, the representatives of Cambodia, Paraguay, Viet Nam (ASEAN), Malaysia, Peru and Cameroon referred to both items 5 and 6 of the July GC agenda.³¹ The General Council took note of the Chair's report and of the statements.

21 DESIGNATION OF ACTING DIRECTOR-GENERAL (WT/GC/M/186)

21.1. At the July meeting, the Chair recalled that Paragraph 23 of the Procedures in WT/L/509 established that "in the event of a vacancy in the post of Director-General, the General Council shall designate one of the existing Deputy Directors-General to serve as Acting Director-General, until the

²⁶ Item 4 of the May GC agenda related to the "*Twelfth Session of the Ministerial Conference – Date and Venue – Statement by the Chairman*" while Item 5 of the May GC agenda related to the "*Process of Appointment of the next Director-General – Statement by the Chairman*".

²⁷ The consolidated list of candidates can be found in document WT/GC/INF/30.

²⁸ The Airgram convening this meeting can be found in document WTO/AIR/GC/30.

²⁹ The eight candidates nominated are: Dr. Jesus Seade Kuri (Mexico), Dr. (Mrs.) Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala (Nigeria), Mr. Abdel-Hamid Mamdouh (Egypt), Ambassador Tudor Ulianoschi (Republic of Moldova), H.E. Yoo Myung-hee (Republic of Korea), Ambassador Amina C. Mohamed (Republic of Kenya), Mr. Mohammad Maziad Al-Tuwajri (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) and Dr. Liam Fox (United Kingdom).

³⁰ The Chairman subsequently convened Informal Open-Ended HODs meetings on 28 and 31. Following the discussion on 28 July, the Chairman announced on 31 July the modalities for Phase Three of the DG Appointment Process. The Chair's statement was circulated in JOB/GC/243. To report on the results of the consultations, the Chair convened Informal Open-Ended HODs meetings on 18 September, 8 October and 28 October. The Chair's statements were circulated in JOB/GC/244, JOB/GC/245 and JOB/GC/247, respectively. A special General Council meeting was convened for 9 November which was subsequently postponed until further notice. In this respect, a Communication from the General Council Chair was circulated in JOB/GC/248. See also Footnote 3.

³¹ Item 5 of the July GC agenda related to the "*Process of Appointment of the Next Director-General – Statement by the Chairman*" while Item 6 of the July GC agenda related to the "*Designation of Acting Director-General*".

appointment of a new Director-General". With the outgoing Director-General leaving at the end of August, the position of Director-General would be vacant as of 1 September. According to the Procedures, therefore, the General Council would need to designate an Acting Director-General until the new Director-General was appointed. As the consultations were still ongoing, the Chair suspended the consideration of the item with a view to resuming the discussion at the appropriate time. The General Council was reconvened on 31 July where, based on his consultations with Members, the Chair proposed that Members proceeded according to an understanding containing a number of common elements which applied and would apply however they resolved the matter. Those were:

- a. "This understanding applies for the period between 1st September 2020 and the date of formal appointment of the new Director-General.
- b. No structural changes will be made to the Secretariat during this period.
- c. All four Deputy Directors-General will continue to fully discharge their existing responsibilities in respect of administration within the Secretariat; engaging with external constituencies/stakeholders as currently; and overseeing their respective parts of the Secretariat in respect of serving Members' regular work and areas of negotiation as appropriate. They will also continue to maintain close contact with each other in the exercise of their respective responsibilities on behalf of the organization.
- d. And, reflecting the existing and appropriate boundaries of governance, the Deputy Directors-General will undertake these responsibilities in close consultation with Members, where relevant, as represented by the General Council Chair."

21.2. The General Council so agreed. The Director-General and the Chair then spoke. The General Council took note of the statements.

22 APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS TO WTO BODIES (WT/GC/M/182)

22.1. At the March meeting, the Chair recalled that in accordance with the Guidelines for Appointment of Officers to WTO Bodies approved by the General Council in 2002 (WT/L/510), and the related practical steps to improve their implementation (JOB/GC/22), she, together with the Chairman of the Dispute Settlement Body, Ambassador David Walker (New Zealand), 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. The process had included an Informal General Council meeting which had been held on 21 February where she had shared with delegations a partial slate of names where there appeared to be consensus – those had been for the General Council; the DSB; the TPRB; the Goods, Services and TRIPS Councils; and the Working Groups on Trade, Debt and Finance and Trade and Transfer of Technology. She had also noted that, for the other bodies, consultations had still been ongoing with the respective groups to finalise the slate and that she had been confident that a solution was within reach. Those consultations had continued until that morning, and as a result, they were in a position that day to present a complete slate of names for the General Council's consideration.

22.2. On the basis of the consultations, there was consensus on the following slate of names:

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| General Council | H.E. Dr. David Walker (New Zealand) |
| Dispute Settlement Body | H.E. Mr. Dacio Castillo (Honduras) |
| Trade Policy Review Body | H.E. Mr. Harald Aspelund (Iceland) |

| | |
|---|---|
| Council for Trade in Goods | H.E. Mr. Mikael Anzén (Sweden) |
| Council for Trade in Services | H.E. Mr. Tan Hung Seng (Singapore) |
| Council for TRIPS | H.E. Ms. Xolelwa Mlumbi-Peter (South Africa) |
| Committee on Trade and Development | H.E. Mr. Mohammad Qurban Haqjo (Afghanistan) |
| Committee on Balance-of-Payments Restrictions | H.E. Mr. Refiloe Litjobo (Lesotho) |
| Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration | H.E. Mr. Manuel Teehankee (Philippines) |
| Committee on Trade and Environment | H.E. Mr. Chad Blackman (Barbados) |
| Committee on Regional Trade Agreements | H.E. Mr. Mārtiņš Kreitūs (Latvia) |
| Working Group on Trade, Debt and Finance | H.E. Dr. Rashidi Said (Malaysia) |
| Working Group on Trade and Transfer of Technology | Mr. Stephen Fevrier (Saint Lucia) |

22.3. On behalf of the Chairpersons of the CTG and CTS, the Chair also made a statement on the consultations on the Chairmanships of the subsidiary bodies of the two Councils in accordance with the relevant guidelines. The United States spoke. The General Council took note of the statements.

22.4. At the May³² meeting, the Chair announced that he would begin consultations on the Appointment of a new CoA SS Chairperson given the impending departure of Ambassador Deep Ford. The General Council took note of the Chairman's statement.

23 ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON (WT/GC/M/182)

23.1. At the March meeting, the Chair, as the outgoing presiding officer of the General Council, made a statement. The General Council then unanimously elected H.E. Dr David Walker (New Zealand) to the Chair.

23.2. The Director-General and the newly-elected Chair spoke. The General Council took note of the statements. The representatives of Chad (LDCs); Seychelles; Benin; Jamaica (ACP) and the Philippines (ASEAN) spoke. The General Council took note of the statements.

³² This item was taken up under "Other Business" at the May meeting. In light of the consultations undertaken in line with the relevant procedures and as the Chairman had received no objections to the proposed appointment, a communication was sent to delegations on 6 July confirming that Ambassador Gloria Abraham Peralta of Costa Rica would be formally appointed as Chair of the Committee on Agriculture in Special Session at its next meeting.