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TRADE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRUCTURED DISCUSSIONS (TESSD)

STATEMENT BY THE TESSD CO-CONVENORS

The following statement, dated 19 February 2024, is being circulated at the request of the delegations of Canada and Costa Rica (TESSD Co-convenors).

We, the Co-convenors of the Trade and Environmental Sustainability Structured Discussions (TESSD), on the occasion of the 13th WTO Ministerial Conference in Abu Dhabi, present the following communication:

1. *Recalling* the TESSD Ministerial Statement ([WT/MIN\(21\)/6/Rev.1](#)) for the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC12) where co-sponsors recognized that international trade and trade policy can and must support environmental and climate goals, and agreed to intensify work on areas of common interest and to identify concrete actions that they could take individually or collectively to expand opportunities for environmentally sustainable trade in an inclusive and transparent way, consistent with their obligations;
2. *Noting* Paragraph 14 of the MC12 Outcome Document, which recognized global environmental challenges and the importance of the contribution of the multilateral trading system to promoting the UN 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals;
3. *Recognizing* the progress that TESSD has made in building trust among Members and laying solid and robust foundations at the technical level for discussion of a wide range of topics, since the issuance of the TESSD Ministerial Statement, in accordance with the TESSD Work Plan 2022 ([INF/TE/SSD/W/17/Rev.1](#)), and the Co-convenors' Statement issued for the high-level stocktaking event in December 2022 ([INF/TE/SSD/W/21](#));
4. *Emphasizing* the substantive elements contained in these three documents, which recognize the importance of multilateral environmental agreements, the important work of the Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE) and other WTO bodies, and the valuable contribution of stakeholders in the discussions with evidence-based and analytical inputs;
5. *Noting* that Members have openly and constructively engaged in the TESSD discussions – in an exploratory and non-negotiating manner – to exchange Members' experiences and discuss current practices and voluntary actions that illustrate how trade and trade policy can be supportive of tackling global environmental challenges;
6. *Welcoming* the inclusive nature of these discussions, which have reflected the relevance of these issues to Members at all levels of development, as well as the inputs from participating stakeholders; and *resolving* to deepen the understanding of the development dimension, especially through the integration of perspectives and interests of developing countries and LDCs;
7. *Welcoming* the progress and evolution of TESSD since MC12, reflected in the achievements of the four thematic Working Groups, pursued through a sectoral approach and articulated in the following four outcome documents:

- a. a compilation of Member practices in the development of trade-related climate measures (TrCMs) with regard to (i) transparency and consultations, (ii) impact assessments, (iii) review following implementation, and (iv) considerations for TrCM policymaking ([WT/MIN\(24\)/11/Add.2](#));
 - b. an analytical summary of discussions on environmental goods and services and renewable energy, covering (i) indicative lists of relevant goods and services, (ii) trade barriers and supply chain bottlenecks, (iii) developing country perspectives and (iv) opportunities and approaches for promoting and facilitating trade in these goods and services ([WT/MIN\(24\)/11/Add.3](#));
 - c. a mapping of the trade and trade policy aspects of circular economy relevant along the entire lifecycle of products as well as areas for possible trade-related action ([WT/MIN\(24\)/11/Add.4](#)); and
 - d. a non-exhaustive compilation of Members' experiences and considerations for the design and transparency of subsidies ([WT/MIN\(24\)/11/Add.5](#));
8. *Encouraging* Members to further develop and build on these outcomes as they continue their work in TESSD and, as appropriate, to consider them in their own policymaking and in their efforts to further progress trade and environmental sustainability at the multilateral level;
9. *Building* on the tangible progress achieved since MC12 and reflecting the inputs provided by Members:
- a. we present a renewed and updated Work Plan ([WT/MIN\(24\)/11/Add.1](#)), where discussions will continue to be deepened in the four Working Groups, focusing, *inter alia*, on enhancing transparency, identifying best practices and opportunities for policymaking, and integrating development perspectives, with a view to delivering concrete results by MC14;
 - b. the Co-convenors will seek to enhance complementarities and create synergies between the Working Groups by extracting common themes relating to trade, climate change, and the environment for consideration by Members by MC14; and
 - c. in carrying out this work, TESSD will complement multilateral work in the WTO on trade and environmental sustainability, including by supporting the revitalization process of the CTE, seeking opportunities to promote information exchange between TESSD and relevant WTO bodies, and continuing outreach to WTO Members.
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