



TRADE POLICY REVIEW

MAURITIUS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Chairperson: H.E. Dr Athaliah Lesiba Molokomme (Botswana)

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1 INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY THE CHAIRPERSON

1.1. The fifth Trade Policy Review of Mauritius was held on 9 and 11 November 2021. The Chairperson, H.E. Dr Athaliah Lesiba Molokomme (Botswana) welcomed the delegation of Mauritius, headed by Mr Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade; H.E. Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady, Permanent Representative of Mauritius to the WTO; the rest of the delegation; and the discussant, H.E. Ambassador Cleopa Mailu (Kenya).

1.2. The Chairperson was pleased that, in addition to physical presence, the meeting also benefited from the Interprefy online connection, allowing for a wider participation of the membership, in particular of officials who could not make the journey from Port Louis given the current circumstances.

1.3. The Chairperson recalled the purpose of TPRs and the main elements of procedures for the meeting. The report by Mauritius is contained in document WT/TPR/G/417, and that of the WTO Secretariat in document WT/TPR/S/417.

1.4. Questions by the following delegations were submitted in writing before the deadline: Iceland; Singapore; the United States; the European Union; Japan; Canada; and India. The following delegations submitted written questions after the deadline: Thailand; and Turkey.

1.5. At the time of the previous Review in 2014 (carried out jointly with that of Djibouti), Members had praised Mauritius' reform efforts to facilitate trade and improve its business environment. The reforms contributed to its relatively good economic performance despite the challenges faced as a small island country. Members had enquired about Mauritius' regional integration strategy, its "blue economy" and fisheries policies, and its priorities in tourism. They had urged Mauritius to refrain from using its import permit system to protect domestic production, and to further strengthen its intellectual property regime and work towards participation in WIPO treaties.

1.6. The Chairperson first focused on Mauritius' economic developments since its last Review. The Secretariat report notes that Mauritius' openness to trade had been one of the reasons for its economic success. About two decades of liberalizing reforms had transformed Mauritius into an almost duty-free economy, with the notable exception of sugar. The reforms had further diversified the economy away from its main manufacturing industries, namely sugar, and textiles and clothing, towards a service-oriented economy, and the country aims to become an investment gateway to Africa.

1.7. The Chairperson further highlighted that during the period covered by the Review, Mauritius further has liberalized its trade regime by, inter alia, dismantling non automatic import licensing procedures on many products. However, for some sensitive agricultural products, the import permit system is still used for self-sufficiency purposes. The implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement has played an important part in the reforms undertaken by Mauritius. The country also has concluded free trade agreements with China and India, both of which entered into force this year.

1.8. As a result of the reforms, Mauritius has experienced steady economic growth by about 3.6% per year on average from 2014 to 2019. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the related global measures, including lockdowns and closures of businesses and borders, its GDP has declined by 15% in 2020. The Secretariat report also notes that the pandemic reinforced a tendency towards greater state involvement in the economy, mainly in industries considered critical to the national interest. It appears that a good performance by the tourism industry with the resumption of foreign travel is likely to contribute to the recovery of the economy.

1.9. The advance written questions submitted for the Review have shown the wide range of topics of interest to Members regarding Mauritius' trade and investment regimes. Numerous questions were raised concerning transparency and good governance, state-owned enterprises, customs matters including tariffs, incentives and subsidies, intellectual property rights, government procurement, agricultural and fisheries policies, and policies on services.

1.10. Mauritius received 160 advance written questions from seven Members for the Review, all of which were sent within the established deadline. Prior to the meeting, Mauritius had already provided

written replies to all of these questions and the Chairperson was looking forward to hearing Mauritius' updates on these matters in the two-day meeting.

1.11. The meeting was a good opportunity for Members to discuss in greater detail issues of interest to them and of systemic importance to the multilateral trading system.

1.12. It was also an opportune moment for Mauritius to update the membership on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on its economy and the measures it had taken in response.

1.13. The Chairperson closed her introductory remarks by wishing Mauritius a very successful fifth Trade Policy Review and wished the meeting a fruitful exchange.

2 OPENING STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF MAURITIUS (HON. MR ALAN GANOO)

2.1. I wish to express our gratitude and appreciation to Ambassador Dr Cleopa Mailu for being the discussant for our Trade Policy Review. Our appreciation also goes to the WTO Secretariat and in particular to Mr Jacques Degbello and his team for the preparation of the Secretariat report, and the constructive engagement with our team in this context.

2.2. This Trade Policy Review is taking place in exceptional circumstances in view of the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet we thought it important to have a Ministerial delegation to attend this exercise as a re-affirmation of our support for the multilateral trading system.

Impact of COVID-19

2.3. As a Small Island Developing State open to the world economy, Mauritius has been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. The lockdowns imposed in 2020 and 2021 have effectively prevented the spread of the virus in the local community. However, economic activities have been severely affected. Our GDP contracted by 14.9% in 2020. All sectors of the economy, except financial services and ICT, registered negative growth. The tourism sector, which contributes directly and indirectly around 23% to the GDP and is an important pillar in terms of foreign exchange earnings and employment, was the most severely impacted. The sector contracted by around 80% in 2020.

2.4. The deficit in the current account of the balance of payments increased to 12.7% of GDP in 2020 compared to 5.1% in 2019. In the face of this situation, Government stepped in to provide significant support to businesses and individuals through the Wage Assistance Scheme and the Self-Employed Assistance Scheme, to preserve jobs and secure businesses.

2.5. The Budget Speech 2021-2022 announced three core strategies, namely to recover from the crisis, to revive all our industries, and to improve our social resilience. Government's objective is to give an exceptional boost to investment through infrastructure development and further improve the ease of doing business. In addition, a new economic architecture is being shaped with the development of new sectors such as the green energy industry, the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industry, and the knowledge industry.

2.6. With the timely implementation of the measures announced, and the reopening of borders to tourists, we expect GDP growth to be between 5-7% in 2021.

Trade Policy issues

2.7. In spite of the difficult situation, Mauritius remains fully committed to a fair and equitable rules-based multilateral trading system. We remain fully committed to deeper economic integration, bilaterally, regionally and globally. Indeed, Mauritius has continued to open up markets at the bilateral and regional levels. Our intention is to consolidate and diversify market opportunities in trade in goods and services; improve competitiveness and the investment climate as well as enhance economic cooperation with as many countries as possible.

2.8. Whilst we understand that all countries must find a balance between domestic realities and global concerns and that this is always a delicate balance, Mauritius believes that we should remain wary of protectionism.

2.9. Mauritius was among the first countries to have ratified and implemented the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement. It joined the Trade in Services Agreement (TISA) negotiations in 2016, which was aimed at opening up the services market, and participated actively in the discussions on domestic regulation. Our schedule of commitment on domestic regulations was circulated to WTO Members on 09 July 2020. We have also been participating actively in the negotiations on fisheries subsidies, investment facilitation and MSMEs.

2.10. An assessment of the e-commerce ecosystem in Mauritius has been made with the support of the UK Technical Assistance Program to consider our eventual adherence to the ongoing discussions on e-commerce on an informed basis. We thank the UK for this assistance and are proposing to deepen this study on the kind of framework we would agree to move in this direction.

2.11. The year 2021 has, in this regard, been an exceptionally rich one for Mauritius with the coming into force of four trade agreements, covering a combined 70% of the world population.

2.12. First, the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA). Probably the most ambitious FTA in the world since it encapsulates a Continent, spanning 55 countries and a population of 1.3 billion people. As an African country which has always favoured the acceleration of regional integration of the continent, Mauritius will continue to actively participate in the second phase of the negotiations with that objective.

2.13. Mauritius and China have also established a Free Trade Agreement which covers trade in goods and services, investment and economic cooperation; an Economic Partnership Agreement with the UK in the wake of BREXIT to ensure the continuity of trade. In addition, a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement with India entered into force on 1 April of this year.

2.14. In parallel, we are currently deepening the Interim Economic Partnership Agreement with the European Union, which came into force in 2012, to include new areas such as trade in services and investment, intellectual property rights, sustainable development, competition policy, agriculture and transparency in public procurement, amongst others.

2.15. Services remain of very high interest to Mauritius as a small island state with limited resource. Thus, Mauritius has continued to engage with COMESA and SADC partners, with a view to opening up the services market in these regions, as the focus had so far been on trade in goods.

2.16. At the domestic level, Mauritius has continued on the path of reform and liberalisation. Between 2014 and 2019, in a pre-pandemic period, the economy grew on average by 3.5%. Exports growth of goods and services remained subdued because of the international economic environment. The simple average tariff was down to 1.3% in 2021, one of the lowest rates in the world as compared to 2.3% in 2014. By maintaining a policy of tariff liberalisation, the percentage of tariff lines attracting zero customs duty in Mauritius has increased from 88.87% in November 2013 to 93.82 % in January 2021. The tariff structure has been simplified with all specific duties, in particular for textiles and garments eliminated to zero, from an ad valorem equivalent as high as 488% for some tariff lines. Export restriction applied on scrap metal has been eliminated.

2.17. Our Trade Policy Review in 2014 made reference of the intention of Government to overhaul the Intellectual Property framework. Indeed, a new comprehensive law on Intellectual property was adopted in 2019. It provides for the protection of new rights such as the utility model, geographical indications, plant varieties and layout designs of integrated circuits. The new legislation is expected to come into effect in January 2022. It further provides for the establishment of an empowered Industrial Property Office to administer all industrial property rights. An Intellectual Property Council that would ensure a coherent and consistent approach to IP policies in Mauritius would also be established.

2.18. Mauritius acceded to the African Regional Intellectual Property Organisation (ARIPO) in September 2020 and will soon initiate procedures to join the Patent Cooperation Treaty, the Madrid Protocol and The Hague Agreement.

Business and Regulatory Reforms

2.19. Our immediate response to the COVID-19 pandemic was to ensure survival of businesses. Our next strategy is geared towards economic recovery by ensuring that businesses thrive in a new and modern environment. Prior to the pandemic, Mauritius engaged in a vast business environment reform programme. This was recognised in the World Bank's ease of doing business report 2020 where Mauritius ranked 13 out of 190 countries. The 2021 Index of Economic Freedom, published by the Heritage Foundation, also ranked Mauritius 13th globally, compared to 21st in 2020. Mauritius remains among the leading countries in Africa on these indexes. We trust that many more from the continent can soon be in the top 20 rankings.

2.20. Two Business Facilitation legislations were enacted within a span of two years, in 2017 and 2019. This required amending over 54 statutes combined with numerous regulations, which gave the impetus for further in-depth reforms across several agencies. The prime objective of these legal amendments was to streamline licensing and allow increasing use of technology. In this view, we

have engaged into a transformational journey to build more resilience, improve competitiveness, and modernise our jurisdiction by further broadening and expediting the reform programme.

2.21. We are accelerating the digitalisation of public sector services delivery by revamping and investing in major projects. These projects include the National Electronic Licensing System; a Smart Port comprising of a Maritime Single Window and an Integrated Single Window for Trade; a new Companies and Business Registration System; a new Land Administration and Valuation Information Management System; a modern notice-based movable collateral registry and automated systems for utility agencies.

2.22. These systems will be supported by modern technologies and fitted with digital payment systems and single sign-ons.

2.23. In view of the pandemic, we are being guided by the "Require Once Principle", information sharing among public agencies, and the principle of "documents should move, not people". An online Business Obstacle Alert Mechanism is also being implemented to address issues faced by the business community.

2.24. A Coordinated Border Management Unit has also been set up comprising relevant Ministries and government agencies working together under one roof as a one-stop-shop to expedite the clearance of goods. Recently, a Sanitary and Phytosanitary Information Management Portal has been launched. The aim is to facilitate trade by providing operators with all the SPS related information that they may require to comply with the regulatory obligations in relation to trade of plant and animal products and to process applications online.

2.25. In addition to digitalisation, our second strategy to improve the investment climate is to modernise our rule-making process in line with Good Regulatory Practice and our network of business-related legislations. We will soon implement a legislation for Regulatory Impact Assessment in Mauritius.

2.26. With the support of EU, we are also conducting a major review of some of our principal legislation related to the following sectors: trade and logistics, construction and land use, tourism, and health and life sciences. A Business Regulatory Reform Council is also being set up. Last but not least, and with the objective of increasing access to finance by MSMEs, we are working towards a secured transaction reform for Movable Asset Based Lending.

2.27. The Government is accentuating efforts to reduce the cost of doing business in Mauritius. Acquisition of property by foreigners has been simplified. The validity of an occupation permit for foreign professionals and investors has been extended from 3 to 10 years. A professional and a retired non-citizen is now allowed to invest in businesses. The number of schemes covered by the non-banking financial services sector has been expanded to include several new products.

Economic Diversification

2.28. Mauritius has adopted a diversification strategy. While consolidating our existing sectors such as agro-industry, textile and clothing and tourism, we have also opened up our economy to new sectors such as ICT, the development of a knowledge hub and medical hub, the film industry, the "blue economy", transshipment and bunkering, innovation and research. The manufacturing sector is being transformed from traditional manufacturing to higher value-added activities. New segments such as vaccine and pharmaceutical production are also being promoted. Appropriate regulatory framework along with a package of incentives to investors have been devised to support the development of these sectors.

2.29. Innovation in all sectors is at the core of Government's strategy for the economy. Government is providing support for businesses, particularly MSMEs, to innovate and reinvent themselves. Incubators are being supported to grow innovative ideas and transform them into feasible projects. Several schemes have been put in place by the Mauritius Research and Innovation Council.

2.30. Government has also come up with a National Training and Reskilling Programme. Disruption innovations in IT and financial services have led to the introduction of a Regulatory Sandbox License which allows projects for which no regulatory framework exists to be implemented in test

environments. This has been beneficial for the on-boarding of several fintech projects in the financial services landscape, but the scheme is not limited only to financial services related activities.

Financial Services

2.31. Regarding financial services, the attractiveness of Mauritius is further enhanced by its reputation as a well-regulated international financial centre. Mauritius has a wide range of International Investment Promotion and Protection Agreements and Double Taxation Avoidance Agreements with a number of countries, which remove impediments to cross border investment flows and provide certainty to investors.

2.32. Significant reforms have also been implemented to comply with international tax standards in terms of substance, transparency and fair taxation. The fiscal regimes of Mauritius are fully compliant with international tax standards as prescribed by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

2.33. The OECD Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes rates Mauritius as a compliant jurisdiction, so does the EU. These underscore the robustness of our legal and regulatory framework and the effectiveness of our system in parallel.

2.34. Mauritius has also joined the Inclusive Framework of the OECD in November 2017 and has committed to implement the Base Erosion and Profit Shifting minimum standards. Mauritius signed and ratified the Multilateral Convention amending 50 of its 51 tax treaties to comply with the BEPS minimum standards.

2.35. An ambitious reform of the financial sector is being implemented including the revamping of our Anti-money Laundering and Combating Financing of Terrorism Legal framework in July 2018. The Financial Intelligence and Anti-Money Laundering Act (FIAMLA), was amended by the Finance (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2018 and the Anti-Money Laundering and Combatting the Financing of Terrorism and Proliferation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act in 2019 and 2020. Existing legislation was also amended and a new framework for implementing the mandatory United Nations targeted sanctions, including Chapter VII sanctions were introduced in May 2019. These actions are testimony of the commitment of the Government to maintain high standards in the sector in full compliance of international standards.

2.36. In the past years between 2018-2021, Mauritius has moved from a compliance level of 14 out of the 40 FATF Recommendations to 39 out of 40. The necessary political commitment remains in place to sustain implementation in the future.

2.37. Mauritius would no longer be subject to increased monitoring by the FATF, a global acknowledgement of the synergy between the Mauritius public and private sector institutions and their common effort to combat money laundering and terrorism finance. However, anti-money laundering and combating of terrorism financing will continue to feature high on the Agenda of Government and Mauritius will continue to take bold actions to protect the integrity of its financial system including the global business sector.

Infrastructural Development

2.38. I mentioned earlier our ambition to upscale infrastructure development as a wider part of the Mauritius Greening Agenda. The modernization of the infrastructural landscape of Mauritius is in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals and aims at combatting climate change. This is a high priority for Government. Since the last TPR, Mauritius has taken one major step to decarbonize the transport industry through the implementation of an alternative public mode of transport with environmentally sustainable approaches, through the Metro Express Project and encouraging the use of electric vehicles.

2.39. This project namely through the Integrated Transport System and Urban Terminals is expected to trigger a multiplier effect on the economy. It is expected to raise the standard of living of Mauritians, bolster job creation and business start-ups and provide avenues for development for other sectors of the economy.

2.40. Green is indeed very high on our national agenda. At COP 26 last week, my Prime Minister enunciated the following measures: reducing gas emissions by 40% by 2030; achieving 60% of green energy in our energy mix by 2030; phasing out coal in electricity generation before 2030; promoting a circular economy involving 70% of waste from landfills by 2030; promoting smart agriculture and island wide tree planting programmes; and encouraging the use of electric vehicles.

Sustainable Development

2.41. Since 2015, Government is promoting the development of sustainable smart cities across the island to create master-planned mixed-use working, living and leisure space that will be environment-friendly. As of now, 11 major smart city projects have been approved and are under implementation. While creating new smart cities, Government is also ensuring that existing cities are rejuvenated. In this perspective, an Urban Regeneration Programme is also being implemented. Regeneration plans for two major cities, including the capital city Port Louis, have been approved.

2.42. To counter the impact of climate change leading to flash floods and heavy storm water run-off, Government is investing massively in a National Flood Management Programme. Investment is also being incentivized in renewable energy projects with the adoption of a biomass framework and greening of the transportation fleet.

2.43. We are taking all the necessary steps to pursue our reform agenda, in spite of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the magnitude of the impact on our economy shows how vulnerable Mauritius is, as a Small Island Developing country to external shocks. SIDS, therefore deserve special consideration at the WTO.

2.44. As I conclude my presentation on the reform agenda pursued by Mauritius since the last Trade Policy Review, I have also highlighted the measures taken by the Government to address the impact of the pandemic, in particular to secure jobs and preserve businesses.

2.45. The future challenge will be how to accelerate economic recovery post pandemic and to combat climate change challenges. Mauritius as a Small Island Developing State, we cannot do this alone. Solidarity of the international community will be the key to unlocking the future for small island developing states like Mauritius.

3 STATEMENT BY THE DISCUSSANT

3.1. H.E. Ambassador Dr Athaliah Molokomme Chair of Trade Policy Review Body; the Honourable Mr Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of the Republic of Mauritius (Head of Delegation); H.E. Mrs Usha Dwarka-Canabady, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Mauritius to the United Nations Office in Geneva; excellencies; and distinguished delegates.

3.2. At the outset, I would like to thank the Chair of the Trade Policy Review Body (TPRB), Ambassador Athaliah Molokomme for her opening remarks, and Honourable Mr Alan Ganoo, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of the Republic of Mauritius for his comprehensive presentation, both of which set stage for our discussion today. I would also like to thank you Chair, for demonstrating confidence in me to serve as a discussant for this fifth Trade Policy Review of Mauritius. It is really an honour and privilege for me to participate in this Review.

3.3. I commend the Government of the Republic of Mauritius and the WTO Secretariat for their detailed reports, covering the period 2015-2020. Indeed, the reports provided an excellent basis for our engagement.

3.4. Let me now proceed by giving a general overview of the Mauritian economic environment over the review period and by extension, the unprecedented year 2020 and the current year 2021.

3.5. As you are all aware, Mauritius is a small island developing country with an approximate population of 1.3 million people, and one of the world's largest exclusive economic zones. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, its average GDP growth was 3.5% annually above the world average. Its openness to trade has been one of the reasons behind its economic success, also supported by its long tradition of parliamentary democracy, good governance, and strong institutions.

3.6. Mauritius, like many WTO Members, has been seriously impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in sharp and sudden contractions in output of key economic sectors such as tourism, trade and manufacturing.

3.7. Over the review period, the main drivers of growth for the country were the services sector, particularly tourism, financial services, information and communications technology (ICT) services, and construction. Mauritius continues to transform its economy away from the sugar, textiles and clothing sectors towards a service-oriented economy.

3.8. As a result of steady economic growth over the review period, Mauritius' per capita income reached about USD 11,000 in 2019, while unemployment declined to 6.7%. However, pandemic-related measures resulted in a 15% drop in GDP and a decline in per capita income to USD 8,700 in 2020. This took Mauritius back to the 2016 GDP level with negative growth in most of the sectors.

3.9. According to the Government report, the textile industry contracted by 31%; the construction sector by around 25%; and the wholesale and retail trade sector contracted by around 12%. The tourism sector was the most affected and declined by around 80%; and the arts, entertainment and recreation activities decreased by around 31%. In contrast, the financial services sector registered a meagre growth of 1% compared to above 5% during the past few years.

3.10. In view of this, Mauritian Government put in place a wide range of measures to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the economy and the population. These included measures such as Commercial Banks Moratorium, Leasing Equipment Modernization Scheme, Enterprise Modernization Scheme (EMS), Revolving Credit Fund and SME Interest Free Loan Scheme among others.

3.11. The economy is expected to recover with a better performance of the tourism industry arising from the resumption of foreign travels. The real GDP was projected to grow in 2021 between 5-7% with the resumption of economic activities and rollout of the vaccination programme.

3.12. Let me now give a brief overview of trade and investment regimes as highlighted by the reports.

3.13. The tourism sector remains Mauritius' flagship sector standing at 8% of GDP in 2019 and was, until the pandemic, one of its fastest-growing economic activities. While the sector expanded over the review period, it faced a number of challenges that include shortage of skilled labour at the domestic level and fierce competition from similar island destinations in the region.

3.14. It is worthy noting that Mauritius' open capital regime and its growing importance as an international investment hub, have contributed to the development of its financial services, which account for about 13% of GDP. Some of the challenges for this sector include the risk of money laundering and financing of terrorism as well as other forms of abuse of the financial system. Moreover, individual countries are becoming increasingly restrictive and often amend their laws resulting in regulatory uncertainty in the industry. In view of making Mauritius a high value-added and reputable financial services centre in the region, the Government has prioritized to reform the sector and implement international best practices.

3.15. As regards the information, communication and technology and e-commerce sector, this is a key driver of the Mauritian economy with a 5.8% contribution to the GDP in 2019 and employing around 27,000 people. The contribution of this sector to GDP has remained more or less constant over the review period, but the value-added in the sector has been increasing. One of the biggest challenges facing the industry is shortage of skilled manpower, which needs to be addressed by the Government.

3.16. Over the review period, the manufacturing sector posted minimal average growth of 0.8%, owing to a decline in investment in the export-oriented enterprises, as well as productivity and competitiveness challenges particularly in the sugar and textiles industries. Besides, the sector is confronted with a deficiency in technological uptake resulting in low research, development and innovation, increasing labour costs and an outdated fleet of production machinery and equipment.

3.17. As regards the agricultural sector, it contributes about 3.9% to GDP, with sugarcane production still playing an important, yet declining, role. Mauritius has a dualistic agricultural sector with an export-oriented sugar industry and a self-sufficiency-oriented food crop and livestock subsector. Mauritius is a Net-Food Importing Developing Country (NFIDC), and imports about 77% of its food requirements. The gap between local food production and consumption continued to widen during the past five years resulting in an increasing dependency on imported food. Therefore, for the country to reduce dependency on imported food and achieve food self-sufficiency, there is need for policies and programmes that support the agricultural sector, more especially the agro-processing sector.

3.18. The fisheries sector remains relatively small contributing about 1.2% of GDP, but provides significant employment in fish processing, which relies on catch imported from outside the vast Mauritian exclusive economic zone, for further processing and export.

3.19. Trade in goods and services as a share of GDP declined from 105% in 2014 to 90% in 2019 and 76% in 2020. The fall in 2020 was mainly attributable to the COVID-19 pandemic, while the decline between 2014 and 2019 reflects, inter alia, the continuation of the downward trend in merchandise exports and a stagnation of services trade.

3.20. Let me now highlight some of sectoral and trade policies and practices and their impact on the multilateral trading system.

3.21. We note that Mauritius put in place various input subsidy schemes and provided price support for sugar, as well as for sensitive crops regulated by the Agricultural Marketing Board. The sugar import tariff was gradually raised from zero to 100%, which is still within Mauritius' binding of 122%.

3.22. Support to the fishing sector included tariff and value added tax (VAT) exemptions on certain inputs and equipment, as well as financial assistance to registered fishermen and cooperatives.

3.23. Mauritius continues to pursue active trade diplomacy, including through the East African Community (EAC)-COMESA-SADC tripartite agreement, and the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, it has also started negotiations on a comprehensive economic partnership agreement with the European Union in 2019. In 2021, Mauritius concluded two free trade agreements with

China and India, which contain new commitments on trade in services. In total, Mauritius participates in eight regional trade agreements, all of which were notified to the WTO.

3.24. It is noted that Mauritian Government underscores the importance of trade facilitation reforms in enabling access to essential inputs for sectors driving the economy, such as tourism, manufacturing, transport, and business services. In this regard, Mauritius was prompt to ratify the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement in 2015 and is already implementing it fully in all but category four, and notified its technical assistance needs for full compliance. However, technical assistance has not been forthcoming, compromising its full compliance with the agreement, according to the Government report.

3.25. The Government put in place several trade facilitation measures that include the Mauritius Trade Easy portal which provides information on import and export procedures and applicable charges and the Government's new Trade Obstacles Alert Mechanism platform that allows operators to report exporting or importing obstacles among other measures. Mauritius also initiated reforms aimed at reducing the cost of doing business such as, eliminating certain application fees, reviewing the cost of permit fees, reducing port and cargo handling charges and facilitating electricity connection for businesses.

3.26. It is noteworthy that, Mauritius continued with its tariff liberalization, launched about two decades ago, which resulted in decline of simple average applied Most Favoured Nation (MFN) tariff rate from 6.6% in 2007 to 2.3% in 2014, and to 1.3% in 2021. Overall, the duty-free tariff lines increased to 93.5% of the total tariff lines with non-zero rates representing the remaining 6.5% of tariff lines.

3.27. Over the review period, Mauritius reduced tariff rates on glassware and electrical machinery and equipment to support its manufacturing sector. Overall, the reforms have contributed to widening gaps between Mauritius' generally low applied tariff rates and its WTO binding commitments at high rates and with limited scope.

3.28. Mauritius levies 15% VAT on all goods and services; and excise duties on 557 tariff lines. The Maurice Ile Durable (MID) levy is collected on fossil fuels as part of the country's strategy to reduce the demand for this product and, inter alia, increase the share of electricity generated from renewable sources from 24% in 2020 to 35% by 2025 and 60% by 2030.

3.29. Non-automatic import licensing procedures were removed on many products. However, for some sensitive agricultural products, the import permit system is still used for self-sufficiency purposes. Also, Mauritius is in the process of revamping its Trade Remedies (Anti-dumping and Countervailing Measures) Act of 2010.

3.30. We note that during the review period, Mauritius continued to simplify export registration procedures and controls. The Freeport Scheme continues to provide incentives to companies engaged in the light processing of imported goods before re-exportation, mainly to other African countries.

3.31. We further note that several export support schemes remain in place. Since 2017, companies engaged in exports of goods have been taxed at 3% instead of the general corporate tax rate of 15%. The Trade Promotion and Marketing Scheme provides air freight export subsidies on all products except for machinery, live animals, and chemicals to most markets worldwide, while the Freight Rebate Scheme provides sea freight export subsidies for agricultural products. A new Export Credit Insurance Scheme was launched in 2015.

3.32. We acknowledge the Government's Africa Strategy which encourages Mauritian entrepreneurs to invest in other African countries; it participates as an equity partner in the capital invested by Mauritian investors and has signed agreements with several African countries on the establishment and management of special economic zones.

3.33. It is noted that Mauritius maintains several investment-incentive schemes which intensified with the COVID-19 crisis, and which include reductions in corporate tax, exemptions of tax on dividends paid to shareholders, subsidized business loans, and direct investments in a wide panoply of Mauritian businesses.

3.34. As relates to intellectual property, a new industrial property Act was enacted in August 2019, consolidating existing provisions on the protection of patents, industrial designs, and trademarks, and providing for the protection of new rights such as utility models, layout designs of integrated circuits, plant varieties, and geographical indications. The Act establishes the Intellectual Property Council, comprising representatives from government authorities and the private sector involved in the generation, enforcement, and protection of intellectual property rights.

3.35. In December 2019, the total value of direct investment channelled abroad through the so-called Global Business sector stood at USD 39 billion, nearly three times the country's GDP. In 2018, following concerns expressed by trading partners, changes were brought to the way tax credits are granted to Global Business corporations that reside in Mauritius but conduct business mainly outside Mauritius.

3.36. We note that the Mauritian Government pursued an ambitious reform agenda to improve the trade, investment and business environment, and invested massively in infrastructural development which resulted into the improvement in the ease of doing business ranking from position 20th in 2014 to 13th in 2019.

3.37. We further note that the Government enacted two Business Facilitation Acts in 2017 and 2019 respectively, amending over 50 legislation, to reduce the cost of doing business and to align Mauritius with best practices in doing business. Concurrently, the trade infrastructure to speed up information exchange and provide relevant clearances was also upgraded with the introduction of electronic systems for processing of import and export permits and the setting up of a coordinated border management mechanism.

3.38. In conclusion, I wish to commend the Government of Mauritius for the immense progress achieved over the review period. Even though, the progress has been threatened by COVID-19 pandemic, the economy has demonstrated resilience, signifying good post-pandemic recovery prospects. I therefore encourage Mauritius to continue working closely with the international community in addressing the highlighted challenges so that we recover better together from this crisis.

3.39. I thank you all for listening and wish you fruitful discussions in the remaining sessions of this Review.

4 STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

ICELAND

4.1. Iceland would like to welcome the distinguished delegation of Mauritius to their fifth Trade Policy Review. I would like to express appreciation to the WTO Secretariat as well as to Mauritius for the reports prepared for this Trade Policy Review, as well as the discussant for his excellent framing of the issues for our discussion today.

4.2. First, regarding our bilateral relations, I would like to recall that in 2009 Mauritius and the EFTA States (Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland) signed a joint declaration the enhance economic relations between them with the aim to promote and investment cooperation.

4.3. As all, Mauritius economy has been seriously impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic with the GDP contracting by 14,9% in 2020 as key economic sectors such as tourism, trade and manufacturing all suffered the effects of the pandemic.

4.4. Iceland welcomes the measures and economic initiative taken by the Government of Mauritius to counter these challenges, however new challenges have emerged which related to trade and trade-related activities. It is now widely recognised that women are likely to be harder hit than men by trade disruptions caused by the pandemic.

4.5. Iceland welcomes Mauritius support to the Buenos Aires Declaration in 2017 and the work following on enhancing women's economic advancement in the Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender, important tool in advancing women's economic empowerment is sharing of best practices of respective experiences relating to policies and programs to encourage women's participation in national and international trade and thus promoting sustainable socioeconomic development. The trade policy review provides an excellent opportunity to do that.

4.6. Iceland has submitted in advance written questions on the participation of women in the economy of Mauritius and welcomes Mauritius' replies as the answers will be useful as the answers will be useful as we gather best practices.

4.7. Iceland appreciates Mauritius' active engagement in the WTO and their continued support for the multilateral trading system. We wish the delegation of Mauritius every success for their Trade Policy Review.

SINGAPORE

4.8. Singapore extends a warm welcome to Mr Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, and his delegation who are participating virtually. Let me begin by expressing our appreciation to Mauritius for its Government report and statement. Our appreciation also goes to the Chair Ambassador Athaliah Molokomme, discussant Ambassador Dr Cleopa Mailu, as well as the Secretariat for their valuable insights. Allow me to make three points.

4.9. First, Singapore and Mauritius share warm economic relations. In 2020, Singapore's bilateral trade with Mauritius totalled USD 72 million, making Mauritius Singapore's 17th largest trading partner in Sub-Saharan Africa. Bilateral trade in services also totalled USD 407 million in 2019, amounting to 9.7% of Mauritius's total trade in services. With Mauritius keen to transform itself into a services-oriented economy, we see further room for cooperation in areas such as financial services, ICT, and transport and logistics. Singapore's Senior Minister and Coordinating Minister for Social Policies Tharman Shanmugaratnam visited Mauritius in 2017. During the visit, Senior Minister Tharman and Mauritius Prime Minister Pravin Kumar Jugnauth witnessed the signing of an MOU between Mauritius and Singapore Cooperation Enterprise. The MOU has contributed to enhancing our bilateral co-operation across a wide spectrum of sectors, including education, light-rail transportation, and water management. We look forward to strengthening collaboration with Mauritius.

4.10. Second, Singapore commends Mauritius' unwavering efforts to re-engineer its economy. In response to the challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, Mauritius implemented a range of

measures which targeted those worst-hit by the pandemic. These included SMEs, tourism and hospitality businesses, and self-employed individuals. To ensure it can emerge stronger from the pandemic, Mauritius undertook digital transformation strategies, including the Digital Mauritius 2030 Strategic Plan, which will better position Mauritius to embrace the digital transformation, including addressing issues like cybersecurity, and artificial intelligence. We are also pleased to note that Mauritius had implemented a national single window for trade facilitation. We look forward to receiving more information on Mauritius' plans to connect its national single window with that of other WTO Members. We similarly welcome Mauritius' adoption of innovative ideas such as the Regulatory Sandbox License Scheme, as well as amendments in its e-commerce legislation to promote growth in the ICT sector.

4.11. Singapore looks forward to continuing our collaboration with Mauritius at the WTO. We are pleased to note that Mauritius was the fourth country to ratify the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) and now fully implements all its "Category A" commitments. Singapore also welcome Mauritius' participation in the various Joint Statement Initiatives (JSIs), including the JSIs on Investment Facilitation for Development and Services Domestic Regulation. Mauritius' continued support for the JSIs reflects its progressive trade policy and will help to ensure that the WTO remains relevant. We would also like to encourage Mauritius to join the JSI on E-Commerce, which we believe will spur further growth for its SMEs, especially in the digital economy.

4.12. Finally, my delegation would like to acknowledge the valuable contributions of Ambassador Dwarka-Canabady and her very capable team in Geneva, especially in their role as coordinator of the African Group. We look forward to continuing working with Mauritius and its Mission in Geneva to strengthen the WTO and the multilateral trading system. We wish Mauritius a successful fifth Trade Policy Review.

UNITED STATES

4.13. The United States is pleased to welcome Minister Ganoo and the rest of the delegation to the fifth Trade Policy Review of Mauritius. We welcome the Secretariat and Government reports and appreciate the opportunity to gain a clearer sense of changes to trade and investment policies in Mauritius since the last Review in 2014.

4.14. We would like to first acknowledge the efforts Mauritius has undertaken to use its trade policy to strengthen its linkages with its regional partners. Mauritius ratified the African Continental Free Trade Area in 2019, is a member of the Common Market for Eastern Africa, and the Southern African Development Community. The United States has been a long-time supporter and advocate for regional integration in sub-Saharan Africa, and applauds Mauritius for its efforts to break down barriers to trade and investment within sub-Saharan Africa. Mauritius has been active in pursuing a number of trade arrangements in recent years, including with China and India.

4.15. The United States and Mauritius enjoy a constructive bilateral relationship. In 2020, the value of the United States imports from Mauritius was USD 242 million with the top import categories in woven apparel, at USD 69 million. In addition, we note significant diversification as precious metal and stone (diamonds) imports comprised USD 56 million of imports, prepared meat and fish (tuna and skipjack) USD 39 million of imports, and knit apparel accounting for USD 19 million of imports.

4.16. The United States remains committed to assisting developing countries to use trade as a tool for economic growth. Mauritius is eligible for the United States' preference programs including the African Growth and Opportunity Act, which allows for benefits including for specific textiles and apparel, and our Generalized System of Preferences. We are pleased that Mauritius has taken advantage of the United States' preference programs and that approximately 10% of Mauritius' exports are destined for the United States.

4.17. We note that Mauritius maintains a market-based economy with a strong, dynamic private sector, elements that have proven to hold the key to economic prosperity. The World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report ranked Mauritius highest in Africa in openness and it is one of the most prosperous countries in sub-Saharan Africa, with a GDP per capita of USD 8,623 in 2020.

4.18. We believe that there is a clear connection between the level of prosperity that Mauritius has been able to obtain and its clear focus on developing strong institutions, maintaining low tariffs, and

a liberal and transparent trade regime. That said, we appreciate the challenges Mauritius has faced as a small island state with an important tourism sector, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

4.19. The United States acknowledges Mauritius' active participation in the WTO and its current leadership as coordinator of the African Group. We appreciate Mauritius' willingness to engage in consultations with the United States and other co-sponsors of the transparency and notification proposal to understand the resource, time and capacity challenges that prevent Members from making good faith attempts to meet their notification obligations.

4.20. It is also quite notable that Mauritius is up to date on its notifications, as was highlighted in the Government report. In that respect, Mauritius exemplifies best practice in meeting its transparency obligations. We would welcome further engagement from Mauritius in our efforts to ensure the Trade Facilitation Committee plays in positive role in ensuring the lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic are captured so that we can build resilience for future crises, and in the SPS Committee where we are seeking to ensure that Committee carries out meaningful work to better enable Members to respond to new opportunities and address emerging pressures for the international trade in food. We would welcome the participation of Mauritius in our Ministerial initiatives.

4.21. We would also like to take this opportunity to note the constructive and positive role the Mission of Mauritius continues to play across the full range of issues under discussion here in Geneva. We want to express our appreciation to Ambassador Dwarka-Canabady and your Mission's team for all their efforts.

4.22. The United States recognizes the progress Mauritius has made in working to create a more open economy and we have submitted a number of questions to better understand Mauritius' processes and mechanisms. We look forward to reviewing Mauritius' responses to our written questions.

4.23. The United States greatly appreciates the opportunity to participate in this Trade Policy Review and looks forward to continuing our dialogue and our constructive work at the WTO.

THAILAND

4.24. Thailand is delighted to participate in the fifth Trade Policy Review of Mauritius and wishes to extend a warm welcome to the Mauritian delegation led by H.E. Mr Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade.

4.25. We would like to thank you, Chair, for your opening remarks, and the discussant, H.E. Dr Cleopa Kilonzo Mailu of Kenya for the insightful analysis of Mauritius' trade policies. We also appreciate the comprehensive but concise reports prepared by the Government of Mauritius and the WTO Secretariat.

4.26. Thailand commends Mauritius for her successful transformation from a monocrop to a well-diversified economy, which contributed to her resilient and steady GDP growth against the backdrop of global economic slowdown during 2014-2019. Nevertheless, Mauritius, like many other countries, has witnessed a significant decline in GDP in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We truly believe that the paths to recovery lie upon the facilitation and liberalization of trade and investment, and thus welcome Mauritius' adoption of trade facilitation measures and increased number of duty-free tariff lines.

4.27. The trade and economic ties between Thailand and Mauritius have been on a good term with the average total trade value accounting to USD 85.45 million between 2014 and 2019. Major traded products are vehicles and parts thereof, plastics and articles thereof and seafood. In 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the bilateral total trade value merely amounted to USD 57.97 million, decreasing by 35.71% from 2019. Thailand firmly believes that there remains a number of potential areas that both countries could explore and work together to promote mutual interest and further strengthen the economic relations between the two countries.

4.28. Moreover, Thailand congratulates Mauritius for her substantial improvement to create an open, transparent, and predictable investment climate. This hard effort has undoubtedly resulted in Mauritius' improved ranking on the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business from 20th in 2014 to 13th position in 2019. Thailand encourages Mauritius to continue pursuing the improvement of her investment regime in this direction.

4.29. Thailand applauds Mauritius for her active and constructive engagement in the WTO. Chief among them are submitting timely notifications under different WTO agreements, joining the Joint Statement Initiatives on Domestic Regulations, Investment Facilitation for Development and MSMEs.

4.30. Thailand also appreciates Mauritius' active role as the African Group Coordinator in the WTO ongoing negotiations on fisheries subsidies and is committed to work together with Mauritius and all other Members to deliver a balanced and meaningful outcome for the future health of the ocean and the livelihoods of the communities who depend on it.

4.31. In this Review, Thailand submitted a number of questions on various areas of Mauritius' trade and economic policy. We would like to thank Mauritius in advance for her response and will study them with interest.

4.32. In closing, Thailand would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the leadership of Ambassador Usha Chandnee Dwarka-Canabady as well as our thanks for the kind collaboration and support that the Permanent Mission of Thailand can always expect from the Permanent Mission of Mauritius. Thailand wishes Mauritius every success in the fifth Trade Policy Review.

TURKEY

4.33. Turkey welcomes the delegation of Mauritius headed by H.E. Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade. We would like to thank the Secretariat and the Government of Mauritius for their detailed reports as well as discussant Ambassador Mailu of Kenya for his invaluable comments.

4.34. As stated in the reports, two decades of liberalization efforts have transformed Mauritius into an almost duty-free economy. Its openness to trade has been one of the reasons behind its economic success. Average GDP growth in Mauritius since its last Review in 2014 was 3.5% annually. Thanks to its successful economic policies, Mauritius has been classified as a high-income country by the World Bank in 2020.

4.35. We commend Mauritius' efforts to transform its economy from a monocrop to a well-diversified one. The Government's reform agenda to improve the trade, investment and business environment resulted in substantial improvement in its ease of doing business ranking.

4.36. Mauritius is an active member of the WTO. During the review period, it has been an active participant in the ongoing negotiations. Turkey welcomes the ratification of Trade Facilitation Agreement in 2015.

4.37. Turkey's approach to African countries is based on a holistic and inclusive partnership. Today, we have 43 Embassies in Africa and host 37 Embassies from African countries in Ankara.

4.38. We have Free Trade Agreement, Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement and Agreement on Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investments with Mauritius.

4.39. Flights of Turkish Airlines to Mauritius began in 2015 and contributes not only to people to people contacts but also to the opening policies of Mauritius. We are ready to explore ways to further develop our cooperation in all fields with Mauritius.

4.40. In order to strengthen our cooperation, we recently appointed an Honorary Consul General in Port Louis. We expect this appointment to facilitate our contacts.

4.41. In conclusion, we would like to take this opportunity to thank the delegation of Mauritius, Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady and her team for the excellent preparation for this Review, as well as their constructive contributions to our work in this Organization.

4.42. We also thank the delegation of Mauritius in advance for their replies to our questions on specific aspects of its trade policy. We wish Mauritius a very successful Trade Policy Review.

EUROPEAN UNION

4.43. I would first like to welcome the delegation of Mauritius, led by the Honourable Mr Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade. I would also like to thank the WTO Secretariat and the Government of Mauritius for their reports, which form the basis for our discussion today. Let me extend our appreciation to the discussant, H.E. Dr Cleopa Kilonzo Mailu (Ambassador of Kenya) for introducing us to the country's Trade Policy Review. The EU would also like to acknowledge the positive approach and constructive role played by H.E. Mrs Usha Chandnee Dwarka-Canabady on behalf of the African Group in Geneva.

4.44. This is the fifth Review of Mauritius, and I would like to start by noting that the European Union shares the Secretariat's views on Mauritius' performance, especially on the measures taken to contain the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

4.45. Mauritius was one of the most hit countries in Africa and as a small island open economy is vulnerable to external shocks. The EU understands that Mauritius may adopt a more targeted approach to support viable firms to adapt to post COVID-19 environment, while gradually reducing its assistance to enterprises that were already unviable prior to the pandemic.

4.46. Mauritius is an original Member of the WTO and continues to play an active role here, in both the multilateral and plurilateral work, including the Joint Statement Initiatives on Investment Facilitation for Development and services domestic regulation. The EU notes with satisfaction Mauritius' progress in implementing the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and its positive record of WTO notifications.

4.47. As the Coordinator of the African Group, Mauritius is in a key position to help the WTO move forward, especially at this time of the WTO reform. The EU expresses its appreciation of the contribution of Mauritius in finding solutions and working on new rules to ensure that international trade contributes to the economic recovery of its Members, and facilitate their integration in global supply chains.

4.48. The EU notes that Mauritius has a sound business regulatory framework. We nonetheless urge the Government to enhance transparency in the transactions of public entities, especially those with the Government as a sole or majority shareholder. Mauritius should involve civil society in a constructive dialogue on trade policy questions through strong linkages with private sector and Government.

4.49. The EU is Mauritius' main trading partner, accounting for 24.7% of Mauritius' total trade in 2020. The EU remains the largest destination for Mauritius' exports (33.2%) and the main source of its imports (21.6%). The interim Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), provisionally applied since 14 May 2012, leads to 100% of Mauritius exports entering into the EU markets duty free. While there has been a decline in our bilateral trade volume since 2020, this is attributable to the pandemic and has affected Mauritius' trade with all major trading partners.

4.50. Negotiations started in October 2019 with a view to deepen this agreement into a comprehensive EPA covering the full range of trade-related issues, including trade and sustainable development as well as reinforced institutional provisions and civil society dialogue. The future agreement will be the first comprehensive, modern FTA in Sub-Saharan Africa. It will increase alignment of the trade policy of Mauritius to the international standards.

4.51. The EU is supporting Mauritius in a wide range of areas, including electronic licensing, land use and construction, trade and logistics, tourism, healthcare and life sciences, intellectual property. The EU also provides capacity building in trade policy making and negotiations.

4.52. The EU notes the active engagement of Mauritius in the negotiations to finalise the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), in addition to being already party to the two existing African continental trade blocs, namely the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA).

4.53. The AfCFTA will improve Mauritius' access to other African markets, and will further add to the competitive positioning of Mauritius as a platform to trade and invest in Africa. The EU is already providing support to the AfCFTA Secretariat and can extend its support to Mauritius through its national and regional programming to help Mauritius take full advantage of the opportunities offered by the AfCFTA.

4.54. In its advance written questions, the EU has raised a wide range of issues, notably timeframe for the different legislation mentioned in the Government report, including an update on the Intellectual Property law, clarification of government procurement matters (namely with the State Trading Corporation), and policies for foreign investment in the tourism sector.

4.55. We are also interested in learning more about the special economic zones and integration process with Africa, actions taken to increase competitiveness and addressing the growth model for sustained and more inclusive economic development.

4.56. the EU acknowledges with satisfaction Mauritius' substantial progress since the previous Review in 2014 despite the challenges faced by the country and reiterates its will to cooperate closely with the Mauritius in its economic recovery.

4.57. We look forward to a constructive exchange of views and wish a successful Review to the Mauritian delegation.

JAPAN

4.58. Japan would like to welcome the delegation of Mauritius, headed by the Honourable Mr. Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, as well as Ambassador Dwarka-Canabady, Permanent Representative to the WTO. Japan would also like to thank the WTO Secretariat and the Government of Mauritius for their informative reports, and the discussant, Ambassador Mailu of Kenya, for his insightful remarks.

4.59. We commend Mauritius for achieving economic growth by maintaining an open market, while we understand that Mauritius' trade in goods and services has declined significantly due to the impact of COVID-19, according to the Secretariat's report.

4.60. Today, Japan would like to comment on three points: (i) our bilateral economic relationship; (ii) engagement in the WTO; and (iii) domestic and regional policies for promoting trade and investment.

4.61. First, we acknowledge that economic relations between Japan and Mauritius have been growing stronger since the last TPR. For example, the opening of the Japanese Embassy in Mauritius in 2017 marked a major step forward. We also recognize that the oil spill from a cargo ship that occurred last year in Mauritius had a tremendous impact on its economy and natural environment and have been working to strengthen relations between our two countries. Last December, the Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs visited Mauritius and agreed with his counterpart to further strengthen bilateral ties on a wide range of issues, including a plan to send the Public-Private Sector Joint Mission from Japan for promoting trade and investment between our two countries. We are glad to note that bilateral cooperation at the private sector level has also become more active in recent years.

4.62. Second, we welcome Mauritius' active engagement in the negotiations at the WTO. In particular, we value its participation and contribution to the Joint Statement Initiatives (JSIs) on the Services Domestic Regulation and the Investment Facilitation for Development. In addition, we welcome the fact that according to the Secretariat's report, the WTO Standing Coordinating Committee of Mauritius has designated electronic commerce as one of Mauritius' priorities in the ongoing WTO negotiations.

4.63. Third, we appreciate Mauritius' efforts on trade and investment facilitation. We appreciate the Government of Mauritius making the promotion of trade in services a priority and its efforts to open up the Mauritian market.

4.64. We commend Mauritius for achieving the number one ranking in Africa in the World Bank Group's "Doing Business 2020". We further note that Mauritius has been promoting investment from Mauritius in African countries through the establishment of the Mauritius Africa Fund. We look forward to seeing Mauritius continuing to play an active role in this way in promoting trade and investment throughout the entire African region.

4.65. We would also like to share that Japan will co-host the Eighth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 8) in Tunisia next year. Japan expects the discussions at the meeting to contribute to further promoting African economies, including the Mauritian economy.

4.66. In conclusion, we appreciate Mauritius' active participation in this Trade Policy Review today, despite its postponement due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We also commend the efforts made by Mauritius to improve its trade environment since the last Review. We wish the delegation of Mauritius a successful Trade Policy Review.

CANADA

4.67. Canada joins other WTO Members in welcoming the Honourable Mr Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, and the other members of the delegation from Mauritius today. We are very pleased to participate in the fifth Trade Policy Review of Mauritius. We thank the Mauritius Government and the WTO Secretariat for their reports.

4.68. We recognize the many opportunities to expand our bilateral trade relationship, particularly given the strong ties of the Mauritian-Canadian community to your country. Our countries share a common objective of sustaining and developing our knowledge-based economies to ensure our citizens are well-prepared for the challenges of the future.

4.69. I would like to recognize the impressive economic transformation in Mauritius over the last few years, particularly the transition to an upper middle-income economy with growing manufacturing, agroindustry, financial, ICT and tourism sectors. Canada recognizes the sustained efforts of the Government of Mauritius to position the country as a strategic player in the financial services sector globally, and its commitment to developing the fintech ecosystem.

4.70. The Mauritian Government is to be commended for its focus on health, education, social protection and the empowerment for women and youth as a means to reduce poverty and address social exclusion. Canada is committed to improving international collaboration in higher education and recognizes the importance of research and innovation in advancing sustainable economic growth.

4.71. In this period of unprecedented health and economic challenges due to COVID-19, the predictability and stability provided by the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the rules-based international trading system is crucial for both Mauritius and Canadian businesses and workers, as well as the path towards economic recovery. It is key to supporting a strong, sustainable, and inclusive economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

4.72. In terms of participation by Mauritius in the WTO's work and in the multilateral trading system, Canada would like to first commend the constructive role the Ambassador of Mauritius has played here in Geneva, including in her role as a group coordinator.

4.73. In relation to the WTO's deliberative function, Canada appreciates the good WTO notification record of Mauritius over the past decade. Such transparency ensures all WTO Members and their stakeholders remain updated on our respective trade policies, and any changes to them.

4.74. We would like to commend Mauritius for its participation in the joint statement initiatives on investment facilitation for development and on services domestic regulation. Canada appreciates the support for the Buenos Aires declaration on Women and Trade by Mauritius and encourage it to join

the Trade and Environmental Sustainability Structured Discussions. We also encourage Mauritius to consider joining the Multi-Party Interim Appeal Arbitration Arrangement as soon as possible.

4.75. Canada welcomes the co-sponsorship by Mauritius of the December 2020 Declaration on Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises, which endorsed six recommendations and declarations in support of MSMEs integration into international trade. We encourage Mauritius to formally join the Informal MSME Working Group.

4.76. Canada recognizes the continuing concerns of climate change and rising ocean levels and associated impacts on the Mauritian economy as a small island developing state, compounded by climate shocks as well as human-caused ecological disasters. Canadians continue to engage with Mauritius in the global effort to concurrently build the "blue economy" and combat climate change. I note the recent offering by the University of Mauritius of a joint BSc degree with the University of Prince Edward Island in Applied Climate Change and Adaptation, the first degree of this kind offered by the University of Mauritius with an international partner.

4.77. We look forward to a constructive exchange of views on all aspects of the trade regime and economy of Mauritius. We appreciate the responses from Mauritius to our questions and wish the delegation the utmost success during this Trade Policy Review.

INDIA

4.78. I would like to extend a very warm welcome to the delegation of Mauritius led by H.E. Mr Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of Mauritius, special welcome to the delegation of Mauritius to the WTO in Geneva which is very ably led by sister Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady, Permanent Representative of Mauritius.

4.79. India is pleased to participate in the Trade Policy Review of Mauritius today. My delegation would further like to commend the Government of Mauritius and the WTO Secretariat for their comprehensive reports and would also thank the discussant H.E. Dr Cleopa Mailu of Kenya for his insightful remarks.

4.80. As reflected in the Secretariat's report during the period under review, the main drivers of growth for Mauritius were the services sector, particularly tourism; financial services; information and communication technology services; and construction.

4.81. Long ongoing liberalizing reforms have shown commitments from Mauritius to lead Mauritius to an open economy and their commitment towards openness to trade.

4.82. Mauritius' role as an investment hub with strong institutions and trade-facilitated business environment. All these have supported economic growth in Mauritius.

4.83. However, the negative impact of COVID-19 has resulted in a drop of 15% in the GDP last year, particularly affecting the tourism industry, an important sector of the economy for Mauritius. The economy is, however, expected to recover, and all of us are there to support vulnerable economies during this period of crisis.

4.84. As part of its diversification efforts, we also note Mauritius' particular focus on harnessing the opportunities emerging on the African continent, particularly through the East African Community (EAC)-COMESA-SADC tripartite Agreement that was concluded in 2015, and the recently concluded African Continental Free Trade Agreement.

4.85. India and Mauritius enjoy multifaceted partnership that is underpinned by historic linkages and close people-to-people contact. India is one of the Mauritius' largest trading partners, though our trade has reached USD 690 million just before the pandemic but it has significant potential to go further up; and it is in this regard that Mauritius and India signed a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement this year on 22 February and this has come into force on 1 April 2021. It has been subsequently notified to the WTO as well.

4.86. The India and Mauritius Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement is the first trade agreement signed by India with an African country, and it covers trade in, both, goods and services, and it encompasses issues of TBT, SPS, rules of origin, dispute settlement, etc. This trade agreement will further cement the already deep and special relations between the two countries.

4.87. Indian companies have invested over USD 200 million in Mauritius in the last five years, and we are committed to harness the full potential of our bilateral trade, economic, and development partnership for the mutual benefit.

4.88. We would like to thank Mauritius for their replies to the questions posed by my delegation that will be studied carefully by my Capital. These questions covered many issues including trade in goods, services, agriculture, and trade facilitation.

4.89. The deep linkage and bonding of India with Mauritius can also be seen on a recent significant event, which in fact happened last week, that our Prime Minister met the Prime Minister of Mauritius at the launch of the Initiative for the Resilient Island States, and this occasion was also joined by the Prime Ministers of Fiji as well as Jamaica. It is a very significant process and particularly in the time when we are talking about climate change, it shows the concern India has for small island nations and we are striving for working for the welfare of the world's most vulnerable countries in the era of climate change.

4.90. Finally, we welcome Mauritius' long-standing support to the rules-based multilateral trading system. It has been an active Member and participant in the world across the full WTO agenda. It has been playing an important role on the African Group coordination this year.

4.91. We look forward to working with Mauritius in further expanding and fostering our trade and investment ties for our mutual benefit and we wish the delegation of Mauritius, ably led by sister Usha Dwarka-Canabady, a productive and successful Trade Policy Review.

JAMAICA ON BEHALF OF THE ACP GROUP

4.92. Honourable Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration, and International Trade, it is truly a distinct honour for me to extend congratulations on behalf of the ACP Group, to you and the members of your delegation on the fifth Trade Policy Review of Mauritius. We thank the delegation for its detailed report. The ACP Group also extends commendations to the Chair, as well as H.E. Dr Cleopa Kilonzo Mailu of Kenya for the insights provided and excellent steering of the discussions today. We appreciate the work of the Secretariat and express our gratitude for its comprehensive report.

4.93. Mauritius undoubtedly is among the top performing Members within the ACP Group and has played an active role in advancing the Group's work on many issues ranging from commodities, culture, climate change, fisheries, and maritime security in the multilateral trade arena. Cognizant of the shared vulnerabilities, we recall the demonstration of support and solidarity Mauritius displayed as a fellow Small Island Developing State (SIDS), as well as a fellow member of the ACP family, to our sister island Dominica, following the passage of Tropical Storm Erika.

4.94. At the wider ACP level, Mauritius currently serves as the Chair of the ACP's Adhoc Group on Tax Matters in Brussels, and constructively engages in the work of the Committee of Ambassadors and other Sub-Committees to develop the Group's positions on many crucial issues. I recall that Mauritius served as ACP Group's Coordinator here in Geneva in 2012 and remains an effective advocate for developing countries and LDC's issues, even while simultaneously serving as Coordinator for the African Group. Moreover, throughout its membership of the WTO, Mauritius has actively and constructively engaged in ongoing WTO negotiations and its regular work.

4.95. It, therefore, is good to see my sister in arms, Ambassador Usha Canabady and other members of the Mauritius team, continue this excellent legacy of championing not only the concerns of Mauritius, but the wider ACP Group. Under her leadership, the ACP and African Group enjoy a cordial relationship that is producing results for all our Members. Ambassador Canabady, it has been a pleasure working alongside you; this is also a show of the longstanding good relations between Mauritius and its OACPS partners, including my own country, Jamaica.

4.96. Prior to this pandemic induced crisis, the World Bank classified Mauritius as a high-income country based on a per capita Gross National Income of USD 12,900 in 2019, an increase of 5.1% from previous year. This is a testament to the upward economic trajectory that Mauritius has been following for several decades through diversification of its economy away from sugar, and textiles and clothing towards a dynamic services sector. In fact, many Mauritius' transformation of its sugar industry is widely admired. We note that the services sector in Mauritius, including inter alia tourism, like many developing states, is among the main drivers of economic growth.

4.97. The country has also pursued new manufacturing sectors and services such as pharmaceuticals, engineering, financial services, and ICT related services such as robotics, Analytics, edu-tech, health-tech, and fintech. Mauritius' focus on building a service-oriented economy is consistent with the ACP Group's belief that services can play a key role in the achievement of other national objectives such as infrastructural improvements, increased competitiveness, and trade facilitation. We, therefore, commend the government's efforts to leverage the island's natural beauty, growing importance as an international investment hub and strong institutions to transform its economy, and promote the expansion of trade.

4.98. However, the COVID-19 pandemic, with its multidimensional impacts particularly on developing countries, brought into sharp focus the interconnectedness of the international community. Mauritius, like so many SIDs that rely on tourism earnings, saw a significant contraction in that and other related subsectors. We are optimistic nonetheless by the Secretariat's report which indicates that the economy is expected to recover.

4.99. The ACP Group also commends the Mauritian Government for demonstrating resilience by adopting concrete steps, such as the implementation of the "Project COVID-19 recovery through trade", to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic on its economy and population.

4.100. This interconnectedness of the international community also offers tremendous opportunities. We commend the government's foresight in pursuing policy initiatives that have positioned Mauritius on a path to becoming an innovation-driven economy.

4.101. During the period under review, Mauritius undertook important reforms to further develop and enhance its ICT sector, such as the enactment of legislation related to data security, protection of privacy, intellectual property rights, and cybersecurity. This has served to increase the attractiveness of Mauritius on the international scene and contributed towards the establishment of several foreign companies in Mauritius. This dynamism is unleashing new opportunities in cloud computing and digital health technologies. We hope to learn from their experiences in future.

4.102. For all Members of the ACP Group, the expansion of trade is key to supporting our national socio-economic goals and objectives. This expansion must be supported by efficient and effective systems and processes. As such, the ACP Group applauds the efforts undertaken by Mauritius to modernize its harbour facilities in Port Louis to foster trade and economic activity.

4.103. For instance, a maritime single window was implemented to improve customs clearance prior to entry; a measure in line with Mauritius' ambitious strategy to transform into a "blue economy". Indeed, the Government is committed to constantly improve and upgrade services provided by the harbour at competitive rates. Continued action in this direction is encouraged.

4.104. The ACP Group also takes note of action by the Government to eliminate trade barriers and to enhance trade competitiveness, through several reforms and digitalization. The ACP Group commends the commitment of Mauritius to implementing the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA), and welcomes the update that Mauritius has fully implemented all 27 measures notified under category A.

4.105. In addition, several measures were introduced to reduce transaction costs and facilitate trade, including enhancing the customs management system; the setting up of Coordinated Border Management Unit to enhance cooperation between the Customs department and other Ministries; and the implementation of an E-payment system for importers to pay duties and taxes. We look forward to further exchanges with Mauritius of their best practices in this regard.

4.106. Mauritius has made significant strides in pursuing open and freer trade. We salute Mauritius for its commitment to promote trade ties at the regional level and bilaterally, through for instance the African Continental Free Trade Area (AFCFTA), the China-Mauritius Free Trade Area (FTA), the Economic Partnership agreement with the UK, and the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Partnership Agreement with India. These actions demonstrate the country's high value on strengthening its participation and integration into the global economy.

4.107. The ACP Group remains encouraged by these efforts which are consistent with our shared goals and objectives to pursue opportunities for the benefit of all developing countries. We also convey our special thanks for Mauritius' contribution of Ambassador Shree Baboo Chekitan Servansing, who served as a member of the Appellate Body and did the WTO extremely well.

4.108. I wish Mauritius continued success in its economic, social and development objectives encapsulated in its national Vision 2030 plan. Finally, on behalf of the Group, we wish the delegation of Mauritius a successful fifth Trade Policy Review.

EGYPT ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP

4.109. I deliver this statement on behalf of the African Group, in which we extend a very warm welcome to H.E. Mr Alan Ganoo, Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of Mauritius, and esteemed delegation from Port Louis and in Geneva. We thank the Government of Mauritius and the WTO Secretariat for their comprehensive reports, as well as H.E. Ambassador Dr Cleopa Mailu of Kenya for his insightful comments as discussant.

4.110. We congratulate Mauritius for its robust growth-oriented development over the years, which has propelled it among upper-middle income countries. In over half a century its per capita income rose from a mere USD 400 to a remarkable sum of around USD 11,000 by 2019, becoming the second highest in Africa while decreasing its unemployment rate to 6.7%.

4.111. The Secretariat report demonstrates that trade openness in Mauritius is key to its economic success. Indeed, sound liberalization reforms transformed Mauritius into an almost duty-free economy and helped the country achieve an average GDP growth of 3.6% during the period from 2014 to 2019.

4.112. Despite the reversed economic gains due to the pandemic, we are confident that the Mauritian economy has the necessary fundamentals for a strong recovery continuing its promising development path. In this regard, we praised the country's "Vision 2030" development plan as an important vehicle to effectively address unemployment, eradicate poverty, further open trade, and encourage innovation.

4.113. The World Bank's recent Ease of Doing Business index shows that Mauritius achieved an all-time record ranking of 13th out of 190 economies, climbing 36 positions since 2016. This outstanding achievement is testimony to the sublime wide-ranging economic reforms towards a more conducive and open trade and investment environment.

4.114. In this vein, the Secretariat report signalled the high and rising FDI and well noted several positive characteristics of trade and overall economic policy including Mauritius' open capital regime and the new Industrial Property Act adopted in 2019, which contributed to a healthier, enforceable intellectual property system.

4.115. According to UNDP, Mauritius recorded positive strides in its Human Development Index, as it currently ranks 66 among 189 countries and remains well positioned to continue on this track.

4.116. However, this commanding economic performance should not eclipse the structural challenges facing the Mauritian economy. For example, the Secretariat report notes that Mauritius heavily relies on imports for its food security and its industrial inputs.

4.117. Mauritius is an active Member in the WTO and with timely notifications adding transparency to its trade regime.

4.118. Mauritius almost fully implemented the Trade Facilitation Agreement in compliance with its obligations. The country's simple average applied tariff rate has declined from 6.7% in 2007 to a mere 1.3%, although it slightly increased for agricultural products.

4.119. In addition, Mauritius is voluntarily implementing liberalization strides including those pertaining to public procurement as well as the environment.

4.120. On the continental front, we would like to commend the active participation of Mauritius in the AfCFTA negotiations and its positive contribution to the advancement of African integration.

4.121. I seize this opportunity to heap praise on our Excellency and dear sister Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady and her brilliant team of experts for their active role and diligence in coordinating the positions of the African Group, especially in such an important time as we approach MC12.

4.122. Finally, the African Group wishes Mauritius a successful and fruitful Trade Policy Review.

4.123. Turning to a brief statement in my national capacity, Egypt and Mauritius share warm bilateral economic relations and share a stake in regional and continental economic integration, as both are members of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and signed the African Continental Free Trade Area.

4.124. During the review period, bilateral trade values doubled and investment continued to flow. However, figures are rather moderate given our shared ambition to explore significant trade and investment opportunities, and thus we look forward to deepen bilateral economic cooperation.

4.125. Let me conclude by wishing Mauritius what I'm sure would be a very successful and fruitful Trade Policy Review.

ANGOLA

4.126. Dear Chair, Excellency, Ambassador Dr Athaliah Lesiba Molokomme; H.E. Mr Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of Mauritius; dear discussant, Excellency, Ambassador Dr Cleopa Kilonzo Mailu; Excellency, Ambassador Ms Usha Dwarka-Canabady; and colleagues. The delegation of the Republic of Angola would like to warmly congratulate the Republic of Mauritius on the public presentation and discussion of their fifth Trade Policy Review.

4.127. We have carefully studied the 59-page Official report from Mauritius, a very detailed document, reviewing with proficiency and transparency the country's economic, financial, trade, and commercial policies since the last TPR assessment in 2014.

4.128. Angola acknowledges the negative impacts of the global pandemic crisis, imposing two severe lockdowns, contracting Mauritius' GDP in 2020 (around 15%), increasing the public debt, and harming important economic trade sectors, namely in services, transportation, and tourism that declined around 80%.

4.129. Notwithstanding, the economy of Mauritius has been showing exceptional resilience and capacity for recovering, grounded in the valuable results of an ambitious long-term reform agenda, that aims to improve trade, the business environment, digital economy, and promote sound financial services.

4.130. As a result of that, on 1 July 2020, Mauritius was classified by the World Bank as a high-income country based on a per capita Gross National Income of USD 12,900. A great achievement that Angola can only but praise as a twofold paradigm, for the development of African countries and developing small island states.

4.131. The Angolan delegation is also grateful for the report from the WTO Secretariat that provides a thorough review of Mauritius' economic and trade evolution since 2014, fully documented with pertinent data, statistics, and graphics.

4.132. The last decade's political and economic reforms have resulted in the further liberalization of the Mauritius trade regime for goods. It is particularly relevant to pay attention to Mauritius' views on the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA), as an essential enabler for increasing its integration and participation in the global trading system.

4.133. Angola has also acknowledged, from the Secretariat review report, the set of notifications to the Mauritius Government on agriculture, fisheries, tobacco production subsidies, and rules of origin in the framework of sectorial applications of the Agreement on Trade-Related Investment Measures (TRIMs).

4.134. However, we emphasize that there is not a particular or national set of cases in these recurrent notifications, but general trends that the COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced through the evident unilateral tendency towards greater state involvement in the economy, mainly in industries considered critical to the national interest.

4.135. These trends, combined with the debates on trade flexibilities in periods of profound global crisis, demand novel reforms and consensus, from TRIMs to TRIPS, that Angola hopes to be appropriately addressed by the forthcoming WTO 12th Ministerial Conference.

4.136. Although the Republic of Angola and the Republic of Mauritius have been founding members since 1993 of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and since 1996 of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), our bilateral trade is still very limited. In 2019, Angola exported to Mauritius USD 499 thousand, despite only through one product, plastic lids, but even this modest figure reduced in 2020, as exports reached only USD 130 thousand. In 2019, Mauritius exported industrial products and furniture worth merely USD 196 thousand.

4.137. The imports increased in 2020 to USD 2.25 million, since Angola bought significant amounts of diversified products, as access to other traditional markets was hampered due to the pandemic crisis. Engaged in a focused effort to diversify the economy, Angola would like to invite public and private companies, entrepreneurs, and investments funds from Mauritius to develop new trade and relations.

4.138. Angola would like to work on finding ways of taking advantage of Mauritius' key role in the Indo-Pacific Region, reinforced by the new Mauritius free trade agreements with India and China.

4.139. We would also like to have a more substantial trade presence in Mauritius, and welcome Mauritius investments, technical and training cooperation in Angola, namely in sustainable tourism, maritime management, e-commerce, and capital markets.

4.140. Dear Chair, Dear discussant, Dear Head of the Mauritius delegation, thank you for your attention. Congratulations to the Republic of Mauritius for an engaging and elucidating Trade Policy Review.

KAZAKHSTAN

4.141. Kazakhstan warmly welcomes the delegation of the Republic of Mauritius led by Honourable Mr Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade. We express our gratitude to the Government of Mauritius for its informative report and statement. We also thank Ambassador Mailu of Kenya for his insightful comments as a discussant and the WTO Secretariat for its comprehensive report.

4.142. We have the pleasure to observe and state that Mauritius, since its last trade review pursued a sound economic performance and further enhanced its trade openness.

4.143. We commend the Government of Mauritius for implementing an ambitious reform agenda to further strengthen trade, investment, business environment, and infrastructure development.

4.144. Particularly we appreciate the goals of Mauritius set out in the Industrial Policy and Strategic Plan for the period 2020-2025 to confront a deficiency in technological uptake, increasing labour costs, an outdated fleet of production machinery, and dependence on textile and clothing.

4.145. We also note that in order to transform Mauritius into an Ocean State by promoting the "blue economy" as one of its main pillars of development, the Government of Mauritius has launched the "Vision 2030" Strategy aimed at consolidation of traditional activities, development of aquaculture, maritime services, marine biotechnology, and oil and gas exploration.

4.146. From the multilateral trading perspective, we welcome Mauritius' prompt ratification of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement within the review period and its hard work on the full implementation of the TFA by launching a series of trade facilitation measures such as introduction of e-payment and single window, continuous enhancement of the customs management system, and strengthening coordinated border management and agency cooperation as well as other trade facilitation measures.

4.147. In this regard, we are pleased to see that Mauritius is among the best performers in Africa in terms of business climate, thanks to all these mentioned reforms. Thus, the World Bank advanced Mauritius from 20th position in the Doing Business index in 2014 to 13th position in 2020. The World Economic Forum also ranked Mauritius favourably. In 2019, Mauritius came 52nd of 141 countries, the highest position in Africa, and one of the most open countries in the world. Strong and transparent public institutions stand out with clear property rights, strong judicial independence and an efficient government. Private institutions are rated as highly accountable with effective auditing and accounting standards and strong investor protection of private companies.

4.148. We recognize Mauritius' constructive engagement in the WTO work, with timely notifications adding transparency to its trade regime. Particularly Mauritius' active participation both in its national capacity as well as coordinator of the African group in the ongoing negotiations on Fisheries Subsidies, WTO response to COVID-19, Services Domestic Regulation, Investment Facilitation for Development, and MSMEs are very commendable.

4.149. In conclusion, we would like to congratulate the delegation of Mauritius and the WTO Secretariat for the hard work and efforts that went into the preparation of this TPR. I also like to express our high gratitude to Ambassador and my dear sister Usha Dwarka-Canabady and her team in Geneva. We wish the delegation of Mauritius every success for their fifth Trade Policy Review.

CABO VERDE

4.150. It is with great satisfaction that my country, the Republic of Cabo Verde, welcomes the fifth Trade Policy Review of its sister Republic of Mauritius. First of all, we would like to welcome the esteemed delegation led by the Honourable Mr Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of Mauritius. This high-level presence clearly demonstrates Mauritius' commitment to the WTO, and also its involvement in the multilateral trading system negotiations for the development and social welfare of the people of Mauritius and Africa.

4.151. I would also like to congratulate Ambassador Mr Cleopa Mailu of Kenya for his excellent presentation and comments. In addition, I would like to congratulate our dear sister Ambassador Ms Usha Dwarka-Canabady for her dynamism and invaluable contribution within the African Group and her team here in Geneva.

4.152. Given the geographical position of our island countries, Cabo Verde and Mauritius are like two lungs connected to the same heart. The development of a credible policy of democratic good governance has allowed our countries to establish a climate conducive to investment and business development.

4.153. It is transparency, good governance and democracy that are the cornerstone of the growth and social progress of a country, in this case Mauritius.

4.154. Despite the COVID-19 crisis, the economic and social performance of Mauritius suggests real will on the part of the authorities to change the current trends through vigorous reforms to improve competitiveness by creating a more attractive climate for foreign direct investment in the country.

4.155. We would like to acknowledge the efforts that have been made by the authorities in combating COVID-19, with vaccination coverage of 88% of the population; this has boosted consumer and business confidence.

4.156. Furthermore, we are bound to note that, in recent quarters of the year, most economic sectors, including manufacturing, construction, information technology and financial services have recorded encouraging positive results.

4.157. The economic miracle of Mauritius today demonstrates that there is nothing easy about the development of any country regardless of its geographical location. Mauritius remains one of the exemplary African countries and a benchmark in terms of political stability and security of foreign direct investment.

4.158. The immense contribution of the country to the establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area deserves special attention.

4.159. In conclusion, we invite all Member States and multilateral partners to support the reforms undertaken by Mauritius to meet the challenges of the crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

4.160. My country wishes its sister Republic of Mauritius every success as a developing island country.

PHILIPPINES

4.161. The Philippine delegation warmly welcomes and congratulates the Mauritian delegation led by Minister Alan Ganoo of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade and Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady of the Permanent Mission of Mauritius in Geneva on their fifth Trade Policy Review. We also thank Ambassador Cleopa Kilonzo Mailu of Kenya for his insightful comments as discussant, and the WTO Secretariat for a comprehensive report.

4.162. The Philippines has a modest bilateral trade with Mauritius valued at USD 35.72 million in 2019, which gradually declined to USD 15.26 million in 2020 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Among the Philippine top exports to Mauritius include prepared foods of cereals, metal furniture, and yellowfin tunas. While Philippine major imports from Mauritius are boards, panels and consoles with electrical apparatus, yellowfin tunas, and medicaments.

4.163. We note from the Secretariat report that Mauritius is a small, open, island economy with a population of close to 1.3 million people. It is one of the world's largest exclusive economic zones (EEZs). The Philippines notes Mauritius' location in the middle of the Indian Ocean helps it to develop the redistribution of goods arriving from the Middle East and Asia among the other African markets, as well as the re-exportation of African products to Asian markets.

4.164. Mauritius experienced steady economic growth before the COVID-19 pandemic with an average of 3.6% GDP growth in 2014 to 2019. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Mauritian economy experienced an unparalleled impact of 15% drop in GDP in 2020.

4.165. According to the Mauritius' Government report, the World Bank classified Mauritius as a high-income country based on a per capita Gross National Income, before the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Per capita income reached USD 11,095 in 2019 before dropping to USD 8,674 in 2020.

4.166. Mauritius maintains an open economy with a low simple average applied MFN tariff of 1.3% in 2021, and where 93.5% of the tariff lines are zero. The Philippines acknowledges Mauritius' ambitious reform agenda to improve its trade, investment and business environment, and its investments in infrastructure development. This resulted in a substantial improvement in its ease of doing business ranking from 20th in 2014 to 13th position in the world in 2019.

4.167. Mauritius, as a founding member of the WTO remains committed to the multilateral trading system. It has been actively participating in the ongoing negotiations on several important issues since the last Trade Policy Review. Mauritius' priorities in ongoing WTO negotiations focused on

fisheries subsidies, investment facilitation for development, and e-commerce. It also participated actively in the discussions on services domestic regulation, and MSMEs.

4.168. The Philippines commends Mauritius support and co-sponsorship of the MSME package of declaration/recommendations, which aims at enhancing MSMEs' access to market and regulatory information, as well as promote the inclusion of MSME-related dimensions in domestic rulemaking.

4.169. At the IGDC, which I chair and coordinate, Mauritius has also been an active participant in the work of the Group dedicated to developing country issues, and we commend Mauritius' leadership role in the IGDC, especially in its role as the coordinator of the African Group.

4.170. I would especially like to thank Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady for emphasizing the importance of developing countries in general and the African Group in particular to remain constructively engaged in WTO capacity building activities, including through her sharing of insights on the recent WTO publication launched earlier this year by the Director-General entitled "Strengthening Africa's capacity to trade".

4.171. In closing, the Philippines looks forward to enhancing the mutually beneficial economic relations with Mauritius, and we welcome the continued engagement of Mauritius in the IGDC.

ZIMBABWE

4.172. First allow me to warmly welcome H.E. Mr Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade and his delegation, including of course, our colleague and dear friend Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady. My delegation wishes to express its appreciation to both Mauritius and the Secretariat for their efforts in compiling the two reports before us. Allow me also to express my appreciation to you Chair, as well as to our discussant, H.E. Ambassador Cleopa Mailu of Kenya.

4.173. We note with much admiration that Mauritius has embarked on an ambitious trajectory to build a strong, resilient and highly development-oriented economy: and that, notwithstanding the inherent vulnerabilities associated with its status as a small island developing state, compounded over the past 24 months by the impact of COVID-19, it has made significant and highly commendable progress.

4.174. Indeed, before the pandemic, over the five-year period 2014 to 2019, the country registered average economic growth of just under 4%, reflecting marked progress in key service industries including tourism, construction and, of course, the financial services sector; that period has also seen impressive growth in the manufacturing, renewable energy and ICT sectors.

4.175. Although COVID-19 has caused an unprecedented dip in economic performance across the board, this solid and more diversified base signal, we believe, excellent prospects for recovery and sustained economic growth as we move beyond the pandemic.

4.176. We commend the Government of Mauritius for the dynamism and depth of its broader economic reform agenda, including the effort directed towards improving the overall business environment. The country's consistently high ranking in the World Bank's Ease-of-Doing-Business Index reflects the success of the tough but effective reform measures implemented.

4.177. In the not very distant past, the Mauritian economy was pretty much rooted in a single agricultural commodity. Today, on the basis of focused and very astute strategic planning, sustained implementation of agreed reforms and, of course, a great deal of hard work, the country boasts an enviably diverse industrial and economic make-up and has become one of Africa's best-functioning and most competitive economies.

4.178. We commend Mauritius for its open-trade policy and for the various trade-facilitating measures implemented during the review period, on documentation, inspection requirements, the reduction of the average applied MFN tariff rate, and the introduction of the National Single Window Mauritius Trade Link during the review period.

4.179. Perhaps a few words about Zimbabwe's relationship with Mauritius. In terms of bilateral and regional cooperation, Zimbabwe enjoys long-standing trade links with Mauritius. It was Mauritian sugarcane farmers who, in the early 20th century, helped to build Zimbabwe's own cane-growing and refining industries. And there are, still today, very close links between the sugar producers of our two countries.

4.180. Mauritius and Zimbabwe both enjoy membership of multiple regional trade and integration blocs, including SADC, COMESA and the Africa Continental Free Trade Area.

4.181. Although still relatively modest, bilateral trade between our two countries does have significant potential to grow, both in terms of value and the general diversity of products traded.

4.182. As Zimbabwe, Mauritius and indeed other Southern and East African nations emerge from the impact of COVID-19, and as we all strive to recover lost ground, our primary focus, certainly in terms of trade, must surely be on our neighbouring countries and fellow SADC/COMESA partners where already existing trading-relationships and trading preferences offer immediate potential to enhance the movement of goods and services.

4.183. Zimbabwe looks forward to deeper and more diversified bilateral engagement with Mauritius and we will certainly be working hard in that direction. Allow me to conclude, by once again welcoming Honourable Minister Alan Ganoo and his delegation to Geneva and to wish them a very successful fifth Trade Policy Review.

BRAZIL

4.184. Brazil would like to thank the Government of Mauritius, represented by H.E. Minister Alan Ganoo, for engaging in its fifth Trade Policy Review and providing Members with an overview of the country's economic performance and adherence to the multilateral trading system.

4.185. We would also like to express our appreciation to the WTO Secretariat for its thorough and comprehensive report, as well as to the Chair, Ambassador Dr Athaliah Lesiba Molokomme, and the discussant, Ambassador Cleopa Kilonzo Mailu, for your contribution to a successful trade monitoring exercise.

4.186. As the reports have pointed out, Mauritius has experienced continued and consistent GDP growth (by about 3.6% per year on average over 2014-2019), and an increase in its per capita Gross National Income (GNI), to about USD 12,900 in 2019, which made it a high-income country according to the World Bank. The main drivers of growth were the services sector, reflecting the transformation of the Mauritian economy in a service-oriented economy.

4.187. The COVID-19 crisis has had a significant impact on the Mauritian economy, especially in its tourism industry. However, the economy is expected to recover, driven by the resumption of foreign travel.

4.188. For the review period, Mauritius continued to advance trade and customs reforms. Its two-decade-long liberalization strategy has transformed Mauritius into an essentially duty-free economy.

4.189. Mauritius is an active Member of the WTO and supporter of multilateralism. We appreciate Ambassador's Usha Dwarka-Canabady openness as an interlocutor and engagement in this Organization.

4.190. Mauritius continued to implement the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, simplifying export registration procedures and controls. In line with its overall openness to trade, Mauritius has also pursued an active trade diplomacy, improving market conditions for products and services through trade agreements and partnerships.

4.191. Mauritius has taken steps towards its consolidation as an international investment hub. Supported by its open capital regime and by double tax avoidance treaties, Mauritius' financial services now account for about 13% of GDP. We also note with satisfaction the adoption of policies

to encourage Mauritian entrepreneurs to invest in other African countries, which have resulted in a significant expansion of the outflows of foreign investments through Mauritius into other countries in Africa.

4.192. We welcome developments in the Intellectual Property front, with the adoption of an ambitious Intellectual Property Development Plan (IPDP), reforms to its IP law and the promotion of innovation across all sectors.

4.193. The sugar and ethanol sectors are an important area of bilateral cooperation and dialogue. Mauritius has been an associate observer at the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP) since July 2006, and the promotion of the Portuguese language is also an important aspect of bilateral exchanges.

4.194. Trade flows between Brazil and Mauritius are relatively modest compared to their potential. Notwithstanding the temporary impacts caused by the COVID-19 economic crisis, we believe there is a wide range of trading opportunities to be harnessed. We wish Mauritius a successful Trade Policy Review.

SOUTH AFRICA

4.195. We would like to congratulate the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of Mauritius, Honourable Mr Alan Ganoo, and H.E. Mrs Usha Dwarka-Canabady, Permanent Representative of Mauritius, as well as the rest of the Mauritian delegation for the fifth Trade Policy Review. We also thank the discussant, H.E. Dr Cleopa Kilonzo Mailu for introducing this Review.

4.196. South Africa and Mauritius share strong commercial bonds, including through economic and trade relations and cooperation in various forms. Our two countries have consolidated bilateral trade relations under the SADC Protocol on Trade, with the trade in goods between our nations fully liberalised.

4.197. It is largely through this regional integration effort that bilateral trade between Mauritius and South Africa has consistently grown. The Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement of 2013 between our countries, and the MOU on Competition Policy of 2016 are among other the legal treaties that bind us.

4.198. As the two reports attest, South Africa was the biggest export market for Mauritian produce in 2020, at 12% of total exports. 42% of total exports of Mauritius to Africa in the year 2020 were destined for South Africa. These exports include apparel, cotton, plastics, staple fibres, machinery, sugars and confectionary, and so on.

4.199. South African imports, on the other hand have grown to account for 7.7% of total imports into Mauritius, with South Africa ranking as the third largest import source of total imports into Mauritius. Of the total imports from the African continent, Mauritius imports 63% of these from South Africa. These imports include vehicles, iron and steel, pharmaceuticals, machinery and equipment, and various agricultural products like citrus and nuts.

4.200. We believe that our joint commitment to regional integration through the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Free Trade Agreement (TFTA) and the recently launched African Continental free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) will propel our trade relations to even greater heights and contribute towards making our respective economies more resilient to global economic shocks, including those due to pandemic like COVID-19.

4.201. South Africa shall continue to cooperate on areas of mutual interest through these developmental regional integration initiatives to ensure that our respective economies achieve the necessary structural reforms that set us and the rest of the African Continent on a qualitative industrialization path.

4.202. The TPR of Mauritius is taking place when the world is still reeling from the effects of the COVID-19 crisis. The world is witnessing one of the worst economic crises ever due to the COVID-19

pandemic. The Mauritian economy was also severely affected with the Mauritian GDP contracting by 14.9% in 2020, while public sector gross debt reached 84.3% of GDP at the end of December 2020.

4.203. The support of the African Group for a targeted and time-limited TRIPS Waiver aims to address vaccine inequity, promote diversification of production of vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics and promote sustainable economic recovery. We thank Ambassador Canabady for her leadership on this issue as the Coordinator of the African Group.

4.204. As we approach MC12, it is worth pointing out that the aspirations of developing and least developed Members among the WTO membership, and the African Group, have been severely set back by the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects. In this regard, South Africa stands firm with Mauritius as the Coordinator of the African Group in her efforts to highlight the call for an equitable global economic recovery, with the WTO at the fore towards attaining the UN SDGs. This necessitates a WTO that puts the needs and interests of developing and least developed economies at centre of the multilateral trading system.

4.205. The economic growth and development of Mauritius is intricately tied to ours, and in this regard our two nations share a common destiny within the family of African Union members, including a shared interest in realising the economic development dreams of the majority of developing and least developed Members of the WTO. In this regard, we affirm our commitment to build on and strengthen our bilateral relations and cooperation in multilateral matters of common interest.

CHAD ON BEHALF OF THE LDC GROUP

4.206. First of all, allow me to extend a very warm welcome to the Honourable Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of Mauritius. His presence honours this assembly and reflects the commitment at the highest level of the Government of Mauritius to the international trading system.

4.207. Let me also welcome our sister Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady for her leadership and commitment to the African Group here in Geneva. Honourable delegations, dear colleagues, on behalf of the LDC Group, the Republic of Chad would like to warmly congratulate the delegation of Mauritius on its fifth Trade Policy Review at the WTO. We also commend Ambassador Cleopa Mailu of Kenya for his excellent work as discussant, as well as the WTO Secretariat for preparing the Trade Policy Review report.

4.208. Mauritius is an important player in world trade. As highlighted in the Secretariat report, and despite the impact of the pandemic on economic activity, Mauritius is an open economy and foreign trade plays an important role in its economic development, contributing to sustained growth as evidenced by the average annual growth rate of 3.6% over the 2014-19 period.

4.209. Like the other WTO Members, Mauritius faces a delicate economic situation owing to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which continues to affect various parts of the world. The GDP growth rate of the Mauritian economy contracted by 15%, as at the end of 2020, compared to the previous year. However, for 2021 a recovery in growth is forecast and this is very welcome.

4.210. We commend the Mauritian authorities for two decades of continuous reform and success in keeping the island on the path of economic diversification and thus increasing its attractiveness for investors. Indeed, it is through regulatory legislative action, both ambitious and enlightened, that the capital opening regime and the growing importance of Mauritius as an international investment centre have contributed to the development of these financial services, which today account for about 13% of GDP.

4.211. These impressive achievements demonstrate clearly the function of the trade development accelerator. Sugar, textiles, clothing, financial services and tourism are the main pillars of the economy.

4.212. Indeed, although sugar cane production continues to play an important role, albeit declining in the plantation economy, sectors creating more added value have become established and are visible on a tour of the island in the form of hotels and technoparks that offer better paid jobs.

4.213. In practice, this translated into an average per capita income of USD 11,095 in 2019. And this fell, as it did all over the world, to USD 8,674 in 2020 because of the pandemic.

4.214. Regarding trade relations with LDCs, Mauritius has trade relations with the majority of LDCs, especially on the African continent, together with which it belongs to a number of regional integration schemes, including the African Continental Free Trade Area.

4.215. Like Mauritius, the LDC Group would like to see an enhanced, rules-based, transparent, inclusive multilateral trading system that meets objectives. We also aspire to sustainable growth and development benefiting our people.

4.216. The LDC Group takes this opportunity to renew its congratulations to Mauritius on its initiatives and the reforms that it has initiated. We wish it every success in this Trade Policy Review and also for the future.

CHINA

4.217. China would like to extend our warm welcome to the delegation of Mauritius, led by Mr Alan Ganoo, Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade to the fifth Trade Policy Review. I would like to thank the discussant, H.E. Dr Cleopa Kilonzo Mailu for his insightful remarks. My thanks also go to the Secretariat for their hard work to prepare this exercise, with the high-qualified document.

4.218. China highly commends Mauritius for its achievements in economic and social development. Mauritius ranked the 12th of 190 countries in World Bank report regarding ease of doing business in 2020, and also ranked among the "Very High Human Development" countries in United Nations Development Programme in 2019. According to IMF, Mauritius has "a record of good governance and strong institutions".

4.219. As is said in the Secretariat report, Mauritius' openness has been one of the reasons for its economic success and experienced steady economic growth during the review period before the COVID-19 pandemic. However, under the context of the pandemic, the high reliance on foreign trade and tourism also brought Mauritius unproportionate and shocking loss with a 14.9% GDP contraction in 2020. China sincerely hopes Mauritius could yield a strong economic rebound this year and after.

4.220. China acknowledges and appreciates Mauritius' active engagement and contribution to the multilateral trading system. First, Mauritius is the original member of the WTO, and has paid tremendous effort in the implementation of the various obligations under the WTO agreements through amending laws and regulations like Customs Act, the Copyright Act, Industrial Property Act and so on.

4.221. Second, Mauritius has been constructively participating in the ongoing negotiations and JSIs like fisheries subsidies, Services Domestic Regulation and Investment Facilitation for Development.

4.222. Last but not least, Mauritius is notably the current coordinator of African Group. With this chance, China would like to commend Ambassador Usha Chandnee Dwarka-Canabady for her hard and excellent job in group coordinating, as well as her great contribution in various configurations representing the African Group and to this Organization.

4.223. In the context of regional integration and cooperation, China commends Mauritius for its positive contribution to the regional economic integration of African continent through participating SADC (Southern African Development Community), COMESA (Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa) and AfCFTA.

4.224. China has remained the second largest trade partner of Mauritius for many years. Influenced by the pandemic, the total trade volume experienced 14.1% decline in 2020. However, during the

first three quarters of 2021, due to global economic recovery and the entry into force of the China-Mauritius FTA in 1 January 2021, the bilateral trade volume dramatically climbed by 35%, exceeding USD 600 million.

4.225. Mauritius is so far the only African country that China has signed FTA with. We are confident that the FTA will provide more solid institutional guarantee for deepening economic and trade relations between the two countries.

4.226. On investment, by the end of 2020, Mauritius' cumulative investment in China exceeded USD 15.5 billion, establishing about 2,500 enterprises in China. On the other hand, China's cumulative FDI in Mauritius totalled USD 1.5 billion. In 2020, China's investment in Mauritius recorded USD 184 million, soaring by more than 500%.

4.227. As Mauritian Prime Minister, Pravind Jugnauth, said in the opening ceremony of 12th Expo Central China in May, the FTA created new developing space in bilateral trade and investment cooperation, and he hoped the enterprises in both countries could seize these opportunities. China is also confident that the economic bond could be further enhanced under fully implementation of the bilateral FTA and Belt and Road Initiative.

4.228. In conclusion, I would like to express, once again, my appreciation to the delegation of Mauritius for their hard work in preparing for the review, and I wish them a very successful Trade Policy Review.

ARGENTINA

4.229. We would like to associate ourselves with the Members that have welcomed the delegation of Mauritius, led by the Honourable Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade. We welcome Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady's leadership in this organization, promoting not only her country's interests but also amplifying the voice of developing countries.

4.230. We appreciate the reports prepared by Mauritius and the Secretariat, which provide a comprehensive overview of this Member's trade policies. We also thank Ambassador Cleopa Mailu for his observations and comments, which have enabled us to deepen our understanding of Mauritius' trade practices and the economic environment in which they are operating.

4.231. Mauritius is a valued trading partner of Argentina. Bilateral trade between our countries amounted to USD 50.8 million in 2020. This year, Argentina was the leading Latin American supplier of Mauritius and the seventh Latin American destination for its exports. To Mauritius we mainly sell cereals, prepared animal fodder, oil seeds and oleaginous fruits, miscellaneous seeds and fruit, and industrial or medicinal plants. Mauritius provides us with optical, photographic and cinematographic goods, surgical medical products and textile products.

4.232. In recent years, Mauritius has made significant efforts and structural changes to diversify its economy. These efforts have made it possible to convert it from a purely agricultural economy into one with emerging but promising industrial sectors and a growing tourism services sector.

4.233. We further note that, despite having been hit hard by the impact of the pandemic, Mauritius has maintained the momentum of transformation, demonstrating the ability to face economic adversity and thus creating a path of adaptability, innovation, consensus-building and good macroeconomic and political management.

4.234. Furthermore, Mauritius is a clear example of a country that works responsibly and constructively within the WTO to strengthen the rules-based multilateral trading system and, at the same time, seeks to complement this system with a wide network of bilateral and regional trade agreements that project the Mauritian economy into Africa and the rest of the world.

4.235. Looking ahead to the next WTO Ministerial Conference, we particularly appreciate Mauritius' contributions towards reaching an ambitious agreement on fisheries subsidies and achieving

balanced outcomes in all areas by placing economic development at the centre of the WTO's considerations.

4.236. Lastly, we wish to emphasize that Argentina wishes to continue expanding trade relations with Mauritius, considering South-South cooperation as a key pillar for strengthening these ties on the basis of the principles of complementarity, equality and solidarity.

4.237. Let me conclude by again thanking the distinguished delegation of Mauritius, you, Ambassador Mailu, and the Secretariat, for this new opportunity to exchange views on Mauritius' trade policies. We reaffirm the importance of all aspects of this exercise and we wish the Minister of Foreign Affairs and all his delegation a successful conclusion to this review.

DJIBOUTI

4.238. Madam Chair, let me begin by congratulating you on the way you lead the Trade Policy Review Body and this review in particular.

4.239. On behalf of the Republic of Djibouti, I would like to extend a warm welcome to the high-level delegation of Mauritius led by the Honourable Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade.

4.240. My delegation is pleased to be able to participate in this meeting with the objective of evaluating and guiding Mauritius' trade policies.

4.241. Djibouti thanks the delegation of Mauritius and the WTO Secretariat for the quality reports provided. My delegation's thanks also go to Ambassador Cleopa Mailu of Kenya for his excellent and useful commentary as discussant.

4.242. Djibouti takes this opportunity to congratulate the delegation of Mauritius on the outstanding work undertaken for this review and wishes to extend its support and encouragement to Mauritius.

4.243. In 2013, Djibouti had the pleasure of a joint review with Mauritius, which remains an example of development for our region. My delegation has followed with great interest the presentation made by Minister Ganoo, who has shared the progress and achievements of Mauritius as well the economic development challenges faced by the country, particularly because of COVID-19.

4.244. A Member of the WTO since its creation in 1995, Mauritius has succeeded, despite the size of its economy, in defining in an exemplary manner the main strands of sustainable and diversified development by making international trade a key factor in its economic development.

4.245. Mauritius has been able to achieve economic transformation through the implementation of a series of reforms conducive to foreign direct investment, the development of tourism, and exports.

4.246. Djibouti welcomes the strategies put in place by Mauritius to address the various challenges mentioned in the reports made available to us for this review, including by strengthening its regulatory frameworks and modernizing its infrastructure.

4.247. Djibouti notes the efforts undertaken by Mauritius for the development of its industrial and financial sectors, but also observes some fragility and some difficulties linked to establishing a sound and reassuring basis in these areas. My delegation encourages Mauritius to persevere in the pursuit of satisfactory sustainable solutions. Furthermore, my delegation congratulates Mauritius on the measures implemented in relation to improving the business climate and recognizes its role as a model in this area, particularly through the adoption of a business facilitation law and the establishment of an electronic licensing system to accelerate investment applications.

4.248. Moreover, the economy of Mauritius appears to be strong in general. Indeed, the country distinguished itself during the COVID-19 pandemic by the measures adopted to support the economy. These account for 34% of the GDP of Mauritius, which is ranked fourth globally among countries that have been able to adopt such measures.

4.249. Madam Chair, in conclusion Djibouti commends the dynamism of the delegation of Mauritius to the WTO under the leadership of Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady and her team for the excellent work they are doing daily coordinating the African Group here at the WTO. My delegation reiterates its best wishes for success to Mauritius and hopes that the country and its distinguished delegation will have fruitful exchanges in the ongoing work of this session. Thank you for your attention.

VIET NAM

4.250. Viet Nam would like to join other Members in warmly welcoming the delegation of Mauritius led by the Honourable Mr Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade to its Trade Policy Review. Viet Nam congratulates the efforts of the Government of Mauritius and the WTO Secretariat for the detailed reports.

4.251. We would also like to express our gratitude to the Chairperson, H.E. Dr Athaliah Molokomme for her introductory remarks and the discussant, H.E. Dr Cleopa Kilonzo Mailu of Kenya for his insightful observations.

4.252. Viet Nam is delighted to note that as a result of steady economic growth before the COVID-19 pandemic, Mauritius, being a small island, was classified as a high-income country by the World Bank in 2020 and was among the "very high human development" countries in 2019. Viet Nam commends Mauritius for these important achievements despite the various challenges.

4.253. It should also be highlighted that, as stated in the Government's report, the diversification of the country has strengthened the resilience of the economy.

4.254. There has been an expansion in real GDP of 3% in 2019 with most economic sectors registered positive growth. Moreover, the unemployment rate in Mauritius dropped consistently since 2016.

4.255. Viet Nam acknowledges the significant structural reforms over the years and the measures adopted by Mauritius to mitigate the impact of COVID-19, with its promotion of innovation across all sectors and its openness to trade.

4.256. Viet Nam would like to commend the commitments of Mauritius, as a founding Member of the WTO, to the multilateral trading system, with its implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement, its active participation in the ongoing negotiations on several important issues particularly fisheries subsidies, MSMEs and its compliance with notifications obligations.

4.257. Though the magnitudes of our two countries' economies are different, however, we share similar features in economic development path, starting with agriculture, followed by textile, manufacturing and services. Even though, our bilateral trade exchange is not extensive, there are examples of partnerships between certain Mauritian and Vietnamese companies in manufacturing sector in which Mauritius has invested in a number of projects in Viet Nam.

4.258. We believe there is still room for the two countries' further collaboration in the upcoming time.

4.259. In conclusion, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to H.E. Ambassador Usha Chandnee Dwarka-Canabady and her team at the Mission for their active engagement and contribution to the work of the WTO, particularly in promotion of the interest of the African Union Members as well as other developing countries. And I wish them a successful Trade Policy Review.

MEXICO

4.260. On behalf of Mexico, I am pleased to extend a warm welcome to the delegation of Mauritius, led by the Honourable Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, and wish to thank Ambassador Cleopa Mailu for his insightful comments.

4.261. I would like to highlight the very valuable and constructive work that the team of the Mission of Mauritius, led by Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady, is doing as part of the activities of this Organization. Ambassador Dwarka-Canabady, in addition to representing Mauritius and serving her country's trade interests well, has managed to discharge the responsibility of coordinating the African Group with excellence and skill.

4.262. The Mauritian economy has been characterized by remarkable economic transformation, moving from a low-income economy based on agriculture to a middle-income diversified economy with growing industrial, financial and tourism sectors.

4.263. Mauritius has achieved steady growth in recent decades, which has resulted in a more equitable distribution of income, an increase in life expectancy, a reduction in infant mortality, and a much improved infrastructure.

4.264. This has resulted in a strong and market-oriented economy, with sustained growth that, as in the rest of the world, was interrupted in 2020 (-14%) by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, it is hoped that, as of 2021, it will once again register significant growth rates. This is reflected in the fact that Mauritius' per capita GDP is one of the highest in Africa.

4.265. It is also worth mentioning Mauritius' determination to maintain an open trade regime, with an average tariff protection rate of 1.3% and in which almost 94% of tariff lines are duty-free.

4.266. For its part, the services sector is of great importance to Mauritius, accounting for 77% of its GDP in 2020, with a strong emphasis on the contribution of the financial services and tourism sectors. However, by its nature, the latter underwent a severe contraction on account of the effects of the pandemic.

4.267. We welcome the Industrial Policy and Strategic Plan for Mauritius, which aims to increase the contribution of the manufacturing sector to 30% of GDP by 2030, from 12% in 2020. However, the use of local content measures could be challenged in terms of consistency with WTO rules.

4.268. Also noteworthy is the use of export subsidies, both for agricultural products and manufactures, a policy that runs counter to the international trend and calls made not to use them.

4.269. Mexico welcomes the progress made by Mauritius since its last review, especially taking into account the negative effects of one of the most serious global economic crises. We have no doubt that Mauritius will continue on the right track, consistent with its commitments and obligations under the WTO agreements.

4.270. Mexico hopes to continue working closely with Mauritius on the various activities that unite us with a view to strengthening the multilateral trading system.

4.271. In this regard, we appreciate Mauritius' active participation in the joint initiatives on services domestic regulation and investment facilitation, while urging Mauritius to join the initiatives on e-commerce and MSMEs.

4.272. Before concluding, I would like to thank the delegation of Mauritius for its work in the context of its fifth Trade Policy Review. We wish Mauritius a successful continuation and conclusion of this review.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

4.273. I would like to extend a warm welcome to the delegation of Mauritius, headed by Honourable Mr Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade. We appreciate the comprehensive reports by the Government and the WTO Secretariat. Our thanks also go to the discussant Dr Cleopa Mailu for his thoughtful remarks.

4.274. Russia values traditionally friendly relations with the Republic of Mauritius and is interested in developing mutually beneficial cooperation in various fields.

4.275. Today, Russia and Mauritius have a small but stable bilateral trade about of about USD 10 million. Russian in particular exports to Mauritius electrical equipment; jewels; timber; fertilisers; raw materials for the jewellery industry; products from various metals; inputs consist mainly of textiles; sugar; semi-finished products from precious metals; and precious stones.

4.276. The agenda for expansion of bilateral trade and economic cooperation was approved by the leaders of our countries on the sidelines of the Russia-Africa Summit and the Economic Forum in Sochi in 2019, with the good potential in assisting Mauritius in developing export and transport infrastructure facilities, information systems, and sea transport.

4.277. Among other promising areas of collaboration are oceanographic research including seaboard mapping exploration and extraction of minerals; exploration of marine biological resources, reserves and fish migration patterns; meteorological research, drawing maps of the sea currents, and specialized training.

4.278. Mauritius has always been one of the most popular tourism destinations among Russians, which was largely facilitated by the Intergovernmental Agreements on the Mutual Abolition of Visa Requirements signed in 2015. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound detrimental effect on the tourist industry around the world. We hope that the resumption of air traffic between Moscow and Port Louis, in the near future, will make it possible to resume and intensify our cooperation in this area.

4.279. Speaking of COVID-19, I would like to highlight Russia's humanitarian assistance in overcoming its adverse effects and help Mauritian plans to fight the pandemic. This year, 60,000 doses of the Russian Sputnik V vaccine registered by the Mauritians authorities in March 2021 were delivered to Port Louis.

4.280. On the multilateral level, Russia commends Mauritius' strong and consistent support for the WTO and the multilateral trading system. Mauritius actively promotes trade liberalization and meaningfully participates in the WTO's negotiations including on investment facilitation for development and domestic regulations of trade in services.

4.281. I would like to highlight the personal contribution of Madame Dwarka-Canabady, who is actively engaged in coordinating the approaches of the African Group Members to the main issues of the WTO agenda.

4.282. In conclusion, we would like to wish Mauritius a successful Trade Policy Review.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

4.283. Welcome to the delegation of Mauritius led by the Honourable Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade. My country expresses its solidarity to Mauritius on the occasion of its fifth Trade Policy Review.

4.284. My country also congratulates Ambassador Cleopa Mailu of Kenya for his work as discussant and the WTO Secretariat for the preparation of the Trade Policy Review report. I take this opportunity to hail the important role of the Ambassador of Mauritius, my sister Usha Dwarka-Canabady, and her entire team in the diplomatic space of Geneva and, in particular, their key role in safeguarding and giving due consideration to the multilateral trading system.

4.285. My country fully supports the vision of Mauritius, which is a strong supporter of the WTO rules while engaging in an open, transparent, inclusive and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system. My delegation also welcomes Mauritius' vision regarding the observance of multilateral trade rules, its determination to comply with notification requirements and its commitment to honouring its WTO obligations.

4.286. As highlighted in the Secretariat's report, on the basis of the numerous liberalization reforms initiated, Mauritius now imposes hardly any customs duties. Its openness to trade has been one of the reasons for its economic success, which is also based on a long tradition of parliamentary democracy, good governance and robust institutions.

4.287. Like the rest of the WTO membership, Mauritius faces a challenging economic situation owing to the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, which continues to affect various parts of the world. As a result, a tapering off can be observed in the share of trade in goods and services, whose GDP fell from 105% in 2014 to 90% in 2019 and to 76% in 2020.

4.288. It was also noted that during the period under review the main drivers of growth were the services sector, in particular tourism, financial services, information and communication technologies, and construction.

4.289. The reforms undertaken by Mauritius have allowed further liberalization of its trade regime for goods with generally low tariff protection, with a particular focus on trade in services.

4.290. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced the tendency to increase state intervention in the economy, mainly in sectors considered essential to the national interest.

4.291. We also note that as a result of sustained annual economic growth of about 3.6% on average over the 2014-19 period, per capita income in Mauritius reached approximately USD 11,000 in 2019 and the unemployment rate fell to 6.7%.

4.292. However, measures arising from the pandemic led to a fall of 15% of GDP and a fall in per capita income from USD 8,700 in 2020. We hope for an upturn in the Mauritian economy subject, inter alia, to good results from the recovery expected in the tourism sector.

4.293. We also hail the good economic performance of Mauritius, which has continued its tariff liberalization, with the simple average applied MFN tariff falling from 6.6% in 2007 to 2.3% in 2014, and to 1.3% in 2021. Tariff protection for agricultural products rose from 1.8% to 3.2% over the review period, whereas tariff protection in the manufacturing sector declined to less than 1%, with duty-free lines accounting for 93.5% of all tariff lines.

4.294. The situation of Mauritius in the middle of the ocean, Madam Chair, the Indian Ocean, I should say, allows it to develop the redistribution of goods from the Middle East and Asia to other African markets as well as the re-export of African products to Asian markets. We welcome the fact that the Government of Mauritius has continued to streamline the export control registration process. The freeport scheme continues to provide incentives to companies engaged in the light processing of imported goods before re-export mainly to other African countries via Mauritius.

4.295. Finally, my delegation welcomes the Africa Strategy put in place by Mauritius, including the Government's encouragement of Mauritian entrepreneurs to cultivate and invest in other African countries and the signing of agreements with several African countries on the establishment and management of special economic zones. As a result, outflows of foreign investment through Mauritius into other African countries have increased significantly. We welcome this dynamic approach and all efforts made by Mauritius in various areas.

4.296. Lastly, the Central African Republic looks forward to working on a fruitful deepening of its trade relations with Mauritius.

4.297. My delegation takes this opportunity to renew its congratulations to Mauritius on its initiatives and the reforms that it has initiated. We wish you every success in the future and for this Trade Policy Review. Thank you.

GABON

4.298. My delegation looks forward to participating in this session devoted to the fifth Trade Policy Review of Mauritius and warmly welcomes to Geneva the Honourable Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of the Republic of Mauritius, and the whole team accompanying him.

4.299. My delegation would therefore like to express its appreciation to Ambassador Cleopa Mailu of Kenya, for his presentation on the economic situation and trade policy of Mauritius. It also

expresses its sincere thanks to the WTO Secretariat for organizing this session and preparing the working documents in an unusual context.

4.300. Since the previous Trade Policy Review of Mauritius and in the light of the reports produced by the WTO Secretariat and the delegation of Mauritius, it appears that this brother country recorded a sustained growth rate of around 3.6% between 2014 and 2019.

4.301. These considerable efforts are largely the result of the implementation of an ambitious reform agenda aimed at improving the trade, investment and business environment, in the context of an open and competitive economy and full integration into the multilateral trading system.

4.302. In this regard, my delegation applauds this reform programme and the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement that has enabled Mauritius to be ranked 13th out of 190 economies, according to the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business index, and to be placed in the category of upper middle-income countries.

4.303. Although these economic performance have been mitigated by the COVID-19 pandemic because of the restrictive measures taken by all States, including Mauritius, we do not doubt that there will be a rapid recovery of the Mauritian economy because it is firmly grounded in profound structural changes marked by the significant diversification of its economy, a guarantee of resilience when faced with external shocks.

4.304. Indeed, more than 10 different sectors support the Mauritian economy: sugar cane, textile manufacturing, financial services, tourism, information and communication technologies, seafood, medical hub, knowledge centre of excellence, renewable energy, construction and creative industries, all key elements of the Government's Vision 2030 plan.

4.305. My country welcomes the excellent political, economic and trade relations that it enjoys with Mauritius.

4.306. As of 2014, our two countries expressed their willingness to engage in dynamic cooperation in key sectors, particularly in the areas of tourism, agriculture, education and health. To this end, two agreements have been signed: a tax treaty and an investment protection and promotion agreement.

4.307. These agreements aim to revitalize collaboration and facilitate both investment and trade between the two States.

4.308. Before I conclude my statement, I wish to pay tribute to the leadership of my sister, Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady, in coordinating trade matters within the African Group, and I would like to take this opportunity to wish Mauritius every success in its Trade Policy Review.

KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

4.309. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is very pleased to take part in the fifth Trade Policy Review of Mauritius and wishes to extend a very warm welcome to its distinguished delegation headed by H.E. Mr Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade.

4.310. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mauritius and the WTO Secretariat for their detailed and comprehensive Trade Policy Review reports. I also thank the discussant H.E. Dr Cleopa Kilonzo Mailu Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Kenya to the WTO for his insightful comments.

4.311. The Trade Policy Review reports highlight that Mauritius maintained a GDP growth rate which averaged at 3.6% during the period of 2014-2019. The main driver of the economic growth was the services sector, particularly tourism, which contributed to 8% of the GDP in 2019.

4.312. During the past two decades, Mauritius set a series of liberalization reforms which resulted in transforming its economy into an almost duty-free economy. Its openness to trade, including concluding two Free Trade Agreements in 2021, has been one of the reasons behind its economic

success. Mauritius as an international investment hub, have done reforms such as open its capital regime supported by double tax avoidance treaties led to the development of its financial services.

4.313. Mauritius commended for its ambitious objective to rebuild, diversify, and expand the manufacturing sector towards 30% of GDP, its continued to simplify export registration procedures and controls, its several investment-incentive schemes.

4.314. We praise Mauritius for its new Export Credit Insurance Scheme that was launched in 2015, its new Industrial Property Act that was enacted in August 2019 which established the Intellectual Property Council in Mauritius.

4.315. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia enjoys excellent trade relations with Mauritius and aims to continue to develop them. In order to strengthen these relations, Saudi Arabia opened its consulate at Mauritius in 2018 while Mauritius has an embassy and consulate in Saudi Arabia.

4.316. Last April 2021, The Saudi Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping of the Republic of Mauritius, which aims at strengthening the friendly relations between the two countries, and to enhance cooperation, partnership and investment in the field of fisheries.

4.317. The promotion of trade relations with regional partners is an important part of the development strategy of Mauritius, and that appears at their active participation in the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) Free Trade Area.

4.318. As original Member of the WTO and as shown in their active engagement in the WTO activities, Mauritius also greatly values the multilateral trading system. Mauritius participates actively in the work of the WTO, with timely notifications adding transparency to its trade regime.

4.319. Before I conclude, I would like to thank H.E. Mrs Usha Chandnee Dwarka-Canabady Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Mauritius to the WTO and her distinguished team for the excellent cooperation between our two missions here in Geneva which serves our mutual interests. To conclude, we wish the delegation of Mauritius a very successful Trade Policy Review.

TUNISIA

4.320. My delegation has the pleasure to participate in the fifth Trade Policy Review of Mauritius and welcomes the Mauritian delegation led by the Honourable Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, to whom we would like to express our consideration for his detailed presentation on the economic situation and trade policy of its brother country. Our congratulations also go to the Secretariat for the comprehensive report submitted to us during this review and to Ambassador Cleopa Mailu for his relevant commentary.

4.321. Mauritius is often cited as a success story for developing countries, especially in Africa, particularly on account of its tourism potential, its cultural diversity and, in the end, its position, as a warm African country with a welcoming population that has enabled it to become a first-choice destination.

4.322. This is also due to the success of its economic policies in industrial free zone textiles, freeport exports, the financial system and, more recently, information and communication industries. The strategies for diversification of the Mauritian economy have often been backed by informed governance by its public authorities, which have managed to foster a constructive partnership with the private sector and also establish democratic traditions with independent institutions and a social model that takes into account the welfare of the population, particularly with regard to health and education, and enabling a strong collective commitment linked to opening up to the world.

4.323. Leveraging its strategic positioning, a shining star at the heart of the Indian Ocean, Mauritius will have played a leading role in the development of the African continent through its accessions to major regional blocs such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Indian Ocean Commission. It is already positioning itself as a port of entry to Africa for the high finance sector.

4.324. Health measures, border closures and other travel restrictions have fortunately saved Mauritius from the devastating effects of the COVID-19 crisis in health terms. Nevertheless, its economy has been impacted. The Secretariat report indicates a 15% decline in GDP and a decrease in per capita income to USD 8,700 in 2020, despite support for the most vulnerable households mainly due to revenue from tourism, representing 35% of total exports and 19% of GDP and employment.

4.325. In addition, the construction sector, which usually accounts for 10% of GDP and 22% of employment, also contracted as a result of the health crisis, which affected construction sites. However, financial services and insurance accounting for 12% of the country's added value were resilient in 2020, as were training and communications, indicating the strength of the actors involved and the efficiency of the financial support measures introduced by the Government.

4.326. However, the heavy dependency of the country, as for many island countries, on imports for industrial inputs and for much of its food supply affected and impacted the difficult economic situation, as for the majority of developing countries. The worsening of the public deficit due to budgetary support measures may affect the country's legitimate ambitions to move up to the category of high-income countries. Mauritius' human capital, ethical investments and the oil potential exploration project in the island's exclusive economic zone (EEZ) are, however, features of a successful economic recovery. We are aware that Mauritius will continue to rely on the "blue economy" and biotechnology in the case of its explorations, in order to develop its economic potential.

4.327. Tunisia and Mauritius have enjoyed diplomatic relations for more than 35 years and maintain close relations in terms of cooperation over trade, tax and culture. Although trade remains modest, it increased fivefold in value terms over the 2017-20 period, from USD 1.5 million to USD 7.5 million.

4.328. We share with Mauritius the common values of effective regional integration, improving the investment climate and business facilitation, and developing free trade. Both countries have engaged in negotiations with a view to a free trade agreement and have already agreed on a framework text on the basis of their respective agreements with the European Union so as to facilitate the free movement of both goods and services.

4.329. The double taxation agreement, signed in 2008, will be an asset for trade facilitation. The maritime sector is also one of the sectors that Tunisia and Mauritius consider to be of the utmost importance for consolidating their cooperation. Our two countries are also committed to strengthening and consolidating this cooperation in all areas.

4.330. Before I conclude, I must congratulate Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady, the Permanent Representative of Mauritius to the WTO, and her team in Geneva for their active engagement in the work of the WTO, and particularly for the commendable strong efforts made in coordinating the positions of our African Group. We wish Mauritius a very successful Trade Policy Review.

PAKISTAN

4.331. We wish to warmly welcome the delegation of Mauritius led by The Honourable Mr Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade at this fifth Trade Policy Review of Mauritius.

4.332. We thank you Chair for your opening remarks, we thank the discussant H.E. Dr Cleopa Kilonzo Mailu of Kenya for his presentation and insightful comments and the Secretariat for their work on this Trade Policy Review.

4.333. We are reviewing today a success story of a small economy which has become in 2020 a high-income country until COVID-19 and its devastating impacts unfortunately changed the course. We wish to commend the Government of Mauritius for this achievement. We further note that the Government has also been praised by the IMF for its record of good governance and strong institutions.

4.334. Since the last Review in 2014, Mauritius has implemented many reforms to become an open and vibrant economy. These reforms include among others tariff liberalization, business facilitation and investment promotion. It has also implemented structural reforms to diversify its economy towards a greater role of Services.

4.335. The Government is furthermore pursuing a very ambitious target for green growth as outlined in its national programme for 2020-2024: "Toward an Inclusive, High Income and Green Mauritius, Forging Ahead Together". We appreciate this desire by the Government and wish them the best in achieving their targets.

4.336. In the context of the heavy impact of the pandemic on the Mauritian economy, we wish to commend Mauritius for its efforts to continue on their path of reforms and showing good recovery and resilience.

4.337. Pakistan and Mauritius enjoy excellent bilateral relations which were further strengthen by the preferential trade agreement signed in 2007. Our bilateral trade during the fiscal year 2020-2021 stood at USD 13.49 million. Pakistan major exports to Mauritius consist of rice, textiles, pharmaceuticals, citrus fruit and leather. Both countries continue to explore opportunities to expand their trade and cooperation to achieve their high potential.

4.338. At the multilateral level, Mauritius is strongly committed to the multilateral trading system and to the long-term objective of development through trade at the WTO. It has an outstanding record of notification. Mauritius is also actively engaged at the WTO with its team in Geneva under the able stewardship of H.E. Mrs Usha Dwarka-Canabady.

4.339. Pakistan closely works with Mauritius in all areas to contribute for the betterment of the Multilateral System, especially in the development pillar and the inclusiveness of the system. We appreciate the contributions of Mauritius in this regard.

4.340. In the end, we wish Mauritius a very successful Trade Policy Review and success in their initiatives.

SWITZERLAND

4.341. First of all, allow me to welcome the Honourable Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of Mauritius, and the whole of his delegation. I also thank Ambassador Cleopa Mailu of Kenya for his illuminating and interesting commentary on today's evaluation. Lastly, my thanks also go to the Secretariat for its excellent report.

4.342. On behalf of Switzerland, I would like to commend the constant efforts of the Government of Mauritius over the past two decades to liberalize its economy. Major reforms have been undertaken, backed by a long and strong tradition of parliamentary democracy, good governance and robust institutions. These values, which are dear to us, are also factors that are conducive to the development of a healthy and resilient economy.

4.343. Among other things, Mauritius promptly ratified the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement in 2015 and is already fully implementing it in several areas, while having notified the aspects on which technical assistance is required for full compliance. This approach reflects Mauritius' commitment and active participation in the work of the WTO. We welcome the timely notifications, contributing to the transparency of Mauritius' trade regime, and the participation of Mauritius in several joint initiatives.

4.344. We would also like to take this opportunity to commend the cooperation between Mauritius and the EFTA States, institutionalized by a Joint Declaration on Cooperation signed in 2009, with the establishment of a Joint Committee.

4.345. In recent years and up to the onset of the pandemic, the Mauritian economy has been characterized by steady growth, with the services sector and particularly tourism being one of the main drivers of growth. The impact of the pandemic has been severe: the national lockdown measures and the closure of borders have led to a significant fall in GDP and per capita income.

4.346. The resumption of economic activities, including in the tourism sector, is promising and is expected to enable the economy to recover and again envisage better performance. This is what we wish for our Mauritian partners, who we encourage to persevere on the path of reforms that will promote the recovery and resilience of their economy. This relates to relatively substantial state involvement in economic activities, and these are issues which the Competition Commission of Mauritius has examined.

4.347. In addition, the Government of Mauritius has put in place a disinvestment programme for a number of its assets, recognizing that state-owned enterprises may prove costly and inefficient in the long term. These reforms are heading in the right direction and we invite Mauritius also to reconsider the "buy local" measures announced in 2020, which may constitute barriers to trade and distortions in competition on international markets.

4.348. We wish the delegation of Mauritius fruitful and constructive exchanges in the context of this review.

SRI LANKA

4.349. My delegation welcomes the delegation of Mauritius led by Hon. Mr Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade and the rest of the Mauritius TPR delegation, for the fifth review of the trade policies and practices of Mauritius.

4.350. We thank H.E. Dr Cleopa Kilonzo Mailu, Ambassador of Kenya the discussant, for his report and insights, and the WTO Secretariat and the Government of Mauritius for their comprehensive reports made available to the delegations in advance of this meeting.

4.351. My delegation acknowledges the reforms introduced by Mauritius to improve the country's trade, investment and business environment, and the massive investments in the infrastructure development which resulted in a substantial improvement in the ease of Doing Business ranking from 20th in 2014 to 13th position in the world in 2019. We also wish to congratulate Mauritius to have introduced the first ever light rail system in a Small Island Developing country (SIDS) which was launched in Mauritius in 2019.

4.352. We noted that as a Small Island State, Mauritian economy has also been seriously impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular textile and tourism sectors, which are considered to be the backbone of the economy. A wide range of measures that have been introduced by the Government through various public bodies to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy and the population, are much appreciated.

4.353. Mauritius, as a founding member of the WTO remains committed to the multilateral trading system. It is actively participating in the ongoing negotiations on Fisheries Subsidies, discussions on Services Domestic Regulations, G-90 proposals, the Joint Statement Initiative on Investment Facilitation for Development and discussions on MSMEs.

4.354. Mauritius is also a party to the Ministerial Declaration on Trade in Technology Products, also known as the Information Technology Agreement (ITA) and was one of the 25 countries involved in its expansion in 2015. We further noted that Mauritius was the fourth WTO Member to ratify the Trade Facilitation Agreement in 2015 and has now fully implemented all its "Category A" commitments which is remarkable.

4.355. We also note that Mauritius has never involved in any of the trade disputes at the WTO either as a complainant or a respondent, which is again a noteworthy development.

4.356. On bilateral trade, my delegation noted that current bilateral trade between the two nations is at a minimal level. A Double Taxation Agreement between the two countries was signed on 12 March 1996 and came into effect during 1998-1999. We noted that considerable Mauritian investments received into Sri Lanka during the period of 2005-2019.

4.357. We believe that there are many areas to be discovered to strengthen the bilateral relations between the two countries and we look forward to exploring those opportunities for further collaborations in the future.

4.358. I, particularly, wish to commend Mauritius for leading the African Group within the WTO under very active and competent leadership of Ambassador Mrs Usha Dwarka-Canabady, whose stewardship has been a rewarding experience for the group in leading up to the MC12.

4.359. In concluding, my delegation appreciates Mauritian highly valued contribution to the multilateral trade system and its active engagement in the negotiations. The dynamic role played by Ambassador Mrs Usha Dwarka-Canabady, Permanent Representative to the WTO and her dynamic and able team in Geneva in proactively engaging in ongoing activities of the WTO, is highly commendable. We wish the Mauritian delegation a successful deliberation and productive outcomes on its Trade Policy Review.

COSTA RICA

4.360. I would like to welcome the delegation of Mauritius present in person and in virtual form. I extend my greetings to the Honourable Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, as well as to my friend Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady, Permanent Representative in Geneva, and the entire team.

4.361. I am very pleased to share a few words with you, even though my delegation has not submitted any questions, as Costa Rica remains very close to Mauritius. There are many parallels between our economies, and Mauritius' achievements give us great pleasure, since it is a reaffirmation for us that we developing countries have the capacity and will to exercise leadership regardless of our size.

4.362. Mauritius is a dynamic, diversified and open economy. It is a robust democracy backed by sound institutions and coherent government policies focused on balanced growth both in economic diversification and in attracting foreign investment.

4.363. During the review period, Mauritius recorded significant growth in services such as tourism. This was obviously impacted by the pandemic. However, an upturn is expected with the gradual reopening of foreign travel. Costa Rica sees many similarities between its development strategy and Mauritius' strategy of productive diversification based on trade and the quality of human talent.

4.364. Like Costa Rica, Mauritius has moved from an economy based on agriculture and textiles to a services-based economy, especially financial and information and communication technology services. This is complemented by an aggressive strategy to attract foreign investment as a driver of the economy.

4.365. On the other hand, we are struck by the fact that, within the framework of the challenges generated by a dual agricultural sector, Mauritius still applies export subsidies to some tropical products, an area where it would be important to begin a gradual transition towards decoupled subsidies in line with the commitments made in Nairobi in 2015.

4.366. I would like to highlight Mauritius' participation in the various joint initiatives. Its active collaboration in services domestic regulation and e-commerce, for example, confirms its role as an economy that believes in modernizing WTO rules and is interested in tackling the issues of this century. Mauritius is certainly a small economy that seeks to derive full benefit from the multilateral trading system. In this connection, we were pleased to see the prompt ratification of the Trade Facilitation Agreement in 2015 and the full implementation thereof in almost all areas. We welcome the development of the Trade Obstacles Alert Mechanism platform and will follow its results with interest.

4.367. Regarding sustainability, we commend Mauritius for aiming to become a country free of plastics by 2024, and also for the actions it has taken to phase out the use of fossil fuels and for its tourism strategy to promote Mauritius as a destination with no carbon footprint. All of these practices position it as a Member that is active and interested in the environmental agenda, in addition to

having a recognized trade agenda. In view of the foregoing, we urge Mauritius to consider joining the initiatives on trade and environmental sustainability, plastics and fossil fuel subsidy reform, to enrich discussions with their experience and expertise in order to create nature-based solutions. This is something we can all learn from.

4.368. I would like to conclude this short statement by thanking the discussant, Ambassador Cleopa Mailu, for his analysis and the Secretariat team for its customary excellent work, and especially by wishing Mauritius a successful fifth Trade Policy Review, reiterating Costa Rica's friendship and commitment to moving forward on the matters that unite us.

GUATEMALA

4.369. On behalf of Guatemala, we extend a warm welcome to the delegation of Mauritius, led by the Honourable Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, and Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady, Permanent Representative of Mauritius, and her team.

4.370. We also thank the Secretariat for the report and the analysis carried out for this review, and we thank Ambassador Cleopa Mailu, Permanent Representative of Kenya, for the interesting and comprehensive analytical view of the status of Mauritius' trade policies that he shared with us this morning in his capacity as discussant.

4.371. Guatemala and Mauritius have maintained friendly relations over the years. This has been reflected in the solid rapprochement that our countries have forged within the framework of the Group of Small, Vulnerable Economies (SVEs) at the WTO. Despite the geographical distance between our countries, our discussions in this group have allowed us to identify in greater depth the important features and challenges we share and, in this regard, to join forces in seeking joint solutions.

4.372. With regard to today's evaluation, it is important to highlight the positive economic performance observed in Mauritius during the review period, in the areas of tourism, financial services, information and communication technology (ICT) services, and construction.

4.373. The review report highlights the strategies implemented by Mauritius on trade facilitation, the establishment of the Mauritius Trade Easy portal, which provides information on import and export procedures and applicable charges, including customs duties and local taxes, regulations and required shipping documents by tariff line and by country.

4.374. Because of its geographical location, Mauritius has become a channel for the redistribution of goods from the Middle East, Asia and the other African markets. For this reason, the Government of Mauritius has been seeking to establish mechanisms to simplify export registration procedures and controls in this area.

4.375. It should be noted that Mauritius continues to work on various incentive schemes that contribute to the economic revival of the country in the wake of the COVID-19 global pandemic.

4.376. For Mauritius, the vision of intellectual property (IP) is critical to its economic development. As part of its trade policy, the Government has therefore pursued strategic objectives that promote and foster innovation and various IP protection systems as a key tool for improving the business environment.

4.377. Another key element in its review is the establishment of a competition policy, with which it hopes to correct all anti-competitive actions and strengthen its competition law.

4.378. Within the challenges identified, it is worth mentioning the importance for Mauritius of continuing to evaluate various avenues to strengthen its resilience towards sudden changes in the global economy, and continuing to work proactively on each of the various strategies that make up its trade policy.

4.379. Guatemala acknowledges the efforts made by Mauritius during the period evaluated in this report and wishes the delegation today a successful conclusion to its Trade Policy Review.

CHILE

4.380. We welcome the delegation of Mauritius, led by the Honourable Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade. We also welcome Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady and all her team from the Permanent Mission of Mauritius in Geneva.

4.381. We would also like to acknowledge the fine work done by both the Secretariat and Mauritius in preparing the respective reports and we congratulate the discussant Ambassador Cleopa Mailu, the Permanent Representative of Kenya.

4.382. While Chile did not submit any questions, partly because our bilateral trade does not involve high figures, we wanted to be present in this process because we value these Trade Policy Reviews and even though Mauritius is a distant Member geographically, we observe with interest the trade development that Mauritius has achieved in recent years, recognizing that openness to trade and its long democratic and institutional tradition are the pillars of its economic success.

4.383. We would like to highlight the development that Mauritius has achieved in services, particularly tourism; for Chile, in fact, Mauritius has gradually transformed itself into a destination for newly-weds. But also noteworthy are financial services and information and communication technology (ICT) services. Its experience and logistical capacity, both on the domestic front and regionally, as well as its integration into different regional blocs, are also aspects to be highlighted.

4.384. In the absence of free trade agreements with Africa, Chile welcomes these elements and hopes to further strengthen ties with Mauritius, recognizing its potential as a platform for integration in the African continent.

4.385. At the multilateral level, and particularly at the WTO, Mauritius is a constructive partner with which we agree on matters such as the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, which Mauritius ratified promptly in 2015, and we both participate in joint initiatives, such as services domestic regulation and facilitation of investment for development. In the latter initiative, we attach particular value to the proposals and contributions presented that reflect Mauritius' positive experience in implementing measures that facilitate flows of foreign direct investment (FDI) into the country.

4.386. The initiatives that Mauritius has implemented over the last period and are reflected in this review – such as: the Africa Strategy, which encourages Mauritian entrepreneurs to invest in other African countries; FDI incentive schemes, which intensified with the COVID-19 crisis; open international bidding as the main public procurement method; and the enactment of the new Industrial Property Act – are illustrations of an active and creative economy.

4.387. Lastly, we are bound to highlight the work being done by Mauritius this year as coordinator of the African Group. Even though we have different views and positions on more than one issue, we have always found an openness in the coordination to discussion and mutual understanding. We wish Mauritius a successful fifth Trade Policy Review.

HONDURAS

4.388. We would like to start by warmly welcoming the delegation of Mauritius led by the Honourable Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, and thank them for their statement and report. Once again, we thank the Chair, the Secretariat for its efforts and important contribution to this review, and the discussant for his valuable comments.

4.389. With regard to the reports under review, we are pleased to note Mauritius' continued commitment to the objectives of the WTO and its willingness to continue with the work of strengthening the multilateral trading system.

4.390. We observe that during the review period Mauritius' economy continued its process of transformation, under which it ceases to rely on its main manufacturing industries to become a services-oriented economy, in particular as a gateway for investment in Africa.

4.391. We note that, in the context of the global economic slowdown, the Mauritian economy performed relatively well in 2019, with real GDP expansion of 3%, and most economic sectors recorded positive growth, except for textiles and tourism, which were affected by the general global slowdown.

4.392. During the review period, we observe that the main drivers of growth were services, in particular tourism, construction, financial services, and information and communication technology (ICT) services.

4.393. We are also aware that in recent years Mauritius has made its best efforts to enact and amend a number of laws on data security, protection of privacy, intellectual property rights and cybersecurity, in order to promote the growth of the ICT sector, complying with international best practices in areas such as electronic transactions, electronic payments, open government data, and cybersecurity.

4.394. We are pleased to note that Mauritius is among the countries with a very high level of human development and that Mauritius continues to perform relatively well according to the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index. It has also been participating since June 2020 in the OECD Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes and its taxation system has undergone several peer reviews and been rated as compliant.

4.395. We agree with Mauritius that the COVID-19 pandemic reinforces the need for collective action to address both the health dimension and its economic consequences, so the function that we perform in this forum has an important role to play in ensuring universal access to vaccines against COVID-19 on the basis of the principle of non-discrimination.

4.396. Lastly, we note that it can be deduced from the reports under review that Mauritius' openness to trade, its long tradition of parliamentary democracy, good governance, sound institutions and political freedom have been some of the reasons for its economic success. So it only remains for us to wish Mauritius every success in its fifth Trade Policy Review.

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

4.397. Brunei Darussalam expresses a warm welcome to the Honourable Mr Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade and his team, and commends the Government of Mauritius for their efforts in preparing their national report. We also acknowledge the work of the WTO Secretariat and thank them for their clear and comprehensive report. We would also like to express our appreciation to H.E. Dr Cleopa Kilonzo Mailu of Kenya for the insightful overview of both reports under consideration.

4.398. Brunei Darussalam and Mauritius established diplomatic relations on 2 July 1990, and bilateral trade relations are ongoing between our two countries, albeit at a low level. Since 2017 however, and despite the pandemic, two-way trade has increased. This has been mainly in the export from Brunei to Mauritius in other plastic and rubber products, machinery, and textiles, whilst Mauritius exported vegetable products, textiles, and plastic and rubber products to Brunei Darussalam; products which are in some of the key sectors of the Mauritian economy.

4.399. Chair, Brunei Darussalam notes that prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Mauritian economy displayed steady growth at an average rate of 3.5% GDP growth annually. Although the economy contracted drastically in 2020 due to the pandemic, real GDP growth forecasted for 2021 is still set to increase by between 5-7% (with some uncertainty, again due to the pandemic).

4.400. This resilience has been due in no small part to the economy's openness and the government's ambitious reform agenda to improve the trade, investment and business environment, as well as the government's commitments to infrastructure development in the country. Measures that the country has taken has seen its Ease of Doing Business index ranking rise from 20th out of

189 countries in 2014 to 13th out of 190 countries in 2020, and we congratulate them on this achievement.

4.401. Despite the devastating impact of the pandemic on the Mauritian economy, causing a drop in GDP of 14.9% in 2020, it is heartening to note that the Government did not introduce any trade protectionist measures, remaining an open economy with average MFN applied tariffs of 1.3% and continuing with its reform efforts and in adopting measures to attract foreign direct investment.

4.402. Mauritius also continues to be an active member of the WTO, participating rigorously in the various negotiations such as on fisheries subsidies as well as in relevant joint statement initiatives, and provides notifications and responses to the WTO on a regular basis.

4.403. This is particularly notable bearing in mind the challenges that Mauritius faces as a Small Island Developing State, particularly during this current crisis.

4.404. On this note, we would like to commend the work of H.E. Mrs Usha Dwarka-Canabady and her team in the Permanent Mission.

4.405. Both Mauritius and Brunei Darussalam are small economies with a small population, and so we recognize and share many of the challenges and difficulties that Mauritius also face. Nonetheless, both our countries remain committed to the multilateral trading system and to the objectives of the WTO.

4.406. In this regard, we would like to express our support for their all their efforts and wish the Government of Mauritius a successful fifth Trade Policy Review.

PANAMA

4.407. First of all, I wish to extend my greetings and congratulations to the Honourable Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of Mauritius, and the entire Mauritian delegation for their outstanding preparation in their fifth Trade Policy Review.

4.408. At the same time, I would like to thank Ambassador Cleopa Mailu of Kenya, discussant for this review, for his insightful introductory remarks that help us to assess the trade policies of Mauritius and the accompanying overview. I would also like to thank the Secretariat for preparing the reports.

4.409. We commend Mauritius for achieving a significant transformation of its economy in just three decades, moving from a monocrop economy to a diversified economy with various contributing sectors, including the services sector, especially tourism and financial services, the textile industry and the seafood sector.

4.410. As a result of these efforts, before the COVID-19 pandemic, Mauritius' average annual GDP growth was 3.5%. On account of this, the World Bank classified Mauritius as a high-income country in 2020, an increase of 5.1% compared to 2018. These are very impressive figures that deserve recognition, especially for a small island developing country.

4.411. As for many other Members, including my own country, the COVID-19 pandemic caused significant losses in most productive sectors in Mauritius, as stated by Ambassador Mailu in his opening remarks. This is why we are pleased to hear about the launch of a series of measures to mitigate the negative effects of the pandemic. Specifically, we would like to know how Mauritius plans to support the MSME sector to help it stay afloat during this period?

4.412. Our attention is particularly drawn to Mauritius' plans to enhance the "blue economy" and to build on the economic potential of the ocean, as outlined in the Government's Vision 2030 plan. The strategy is to work on consolidating traditional activities but also to develop new ones, including aquaculture, maritime services and maritime biotechnology. In this regard, it will be interesting to follow up on the work of the newly created Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping, in view of the full potential of this sector for Mauritius and other countries with similar geographical characteristics.

4.413. Mauritius is a net food importer. It imports over 75% of its food and the difference between production and consumption has been expanding over the past five years. We note with concern that the agricultural policy oriented towards self-sufficiency has not yielded the expected results. At present, Mauritius is self-sufficient in the production of fresh vegetables, poultry and eggs. We will follow with interest the various policies adopted to address this situation.

4.414. We hope that the measures described, and others, can contribute to achieving the current forecasts for 2021, namely an increase in real GDP of between 5 and 7%.

4.415. We would like to congratulate Mauritius on its active participation in the multilateral trading system. It has shown proactive and capable leadership coordinating the African Group in the ongoing fisheries subsidies negotiations. Its highly visible participation in other preparations for the 12th Ministerial Conference is also remarkable.

4.416. Lastly, Madam Chair, we wish Mauritius success in this review and we would like to highlight the admirable management of its delegation in Geneva led by Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady.

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

4.417. I would like to thank the delegation of Mauritius for preparing this Review. My special thanks go as well to Ambassador Dr Cleopa Kilonzo Mailu for his insightful contribution and to the Secretariat for its informative report.

4.418. Korea and Mauritius have enjoyed an excellent economic relationship over the years. Despite some fluctuations, trade activities between Korea and Mauritius have increased steadily.

4.419. While Korea mainly exports transport equipment and machinery to Mauritius, Mauritius' top exporting goods are textiles, raw materials such as copper and rubber. Before the pandemic, the number of Korean tourists in Mauritius grew in a fast pace. I believe that our trade relationship is quite complimentary with the utilization of the respective competitive advantage.

4.420. We note that Mauritius achieved a steady economic growth between 2014 and 2019, by about 3.6% annually before the COVID-19 crisis. Mauritius is currently suffering from the huge impacts of the pandemic, especially in the area of tourism. Nevertheless, as the global economy is recovering from the pandemic, we are sure that Mauritius will return to its normal path of growth soon.

4.421. Korea highly commends Mauritius' openness to trade, which has functioned as one of the reasons for its economic success. Even though Mauritius is a small island with a small population, its liberalization reforms have made full use of its competitive advantage, enabling Mauritius to be a resilient economy. It has a great portfolio of economic engines consisting of manufacturing and services including tourism, finance, logistics, and so forth. Thanks to its economic policies, together with good governance and a strong institution, Mauritius is enjoying the numerous economic benefits of the free trade system. Mauritius is one of the good examples of why a country needs to pursue an open system and why WTO exists and continuously needs go forward towards a free trade system.

4.422. We also notice that Mauritius' recent economic growth is attributed to the service sector. This is a good sign for a resilient economy. The competition for cost reduction in the global manufacturing sector has become fiercer and will continue to be so as countries with strong competitiveness in the manufacturing area are constantly emerging due to their integration into the free trade system and the flow of global investment. Mauritius has actively participated in the JSI negotiations on services domestic regulation. If this regulation is implemented after MC12, it will enjoy more transparency and predictability in the global service market.

4.423. Korea appreciates Mauritius' efforts for the multilateral trade system in the past decades, such as active participation in WTO work, timely notifications, trade facilitation, and, above all, tariff liberalization. We are sure that these efforts will contribute to the competitiveness and resilience of its economy. Nevertheless, I would like to notice subsidies, preferential import and export tariffs, import permit system, and "buy local" provisions in some areas as policy objectives. We respect the

policy objectives of Mauritius. But the long-term effects from those measures need to be considered in a balanced manner.

4.424. We wish Mauritius a successful Review.

MOZAMBIQUE

4.425. At the outset, my delegation would like to warmly welcome the Honourable Mr Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of Mauritius, Head of the Delegation, as well as the entire delegation of Mauritius, to this fifth Trade Policy Review.

4.426. Allow me Chair, to congratulate you in our role as Chairperson and congratulate the Government of Mauritius, the WTO Secretariat, the Head of the Trade Policy Division as well as the teams that were engaged in the preparations of the information contained in the reports put forward to Members. These reports enabled us to get very exhaustive and consistent information and updates concerning developments in Mauritius' policies. Reforms undertaken and in progress by Mauritius Government, since the last Trade Policy Review.

4.427. We thank very much H.E. Dr Cleopa Kilonzo Mailu, Ambassador of Kenya, who in his role of discussant, provided Members a detailed analysis on the economic and broader reform policies undertaken by Mauritius Government, since the last TPR.

4.428. As indicated in the reports and also referred to by the Minister in his presentation, after the last TPR, the Government of Mauritius, has continuously been undertaking many reforms that enable more conducive policies in various economic domains, this, enhancing the Mauritius broader and sector specific policies reforms that has resulted in remarkable improvements in several areas of the economic development.

4.429. The reforms enabled substantial advancement and development achievements that are historic and remarkable advancing a new stage to which Mauritius, committed to follow new vision of development and a more open economy, was able to step up from a monoculture dependant country to a diversified economy, thus, successfully registering remarkable progresses in various fields of economic development.

4.430. We commend the Government for its determination to continue reforms modernization that firmly contribute to safeguard the multilateral trading system and oppose protectionist trends, thus, contributing for promotion of a more open trade.

4.431. The government's vision of development as well as its engagement, based on the undertaken economic policies and other relevant reforms, is leading the country to a successful promotion of development, through diversification of production, investment, more job creation, strengthening of small and medium enterprises.

4.432. Mauritius and Mozambique enjoy bilateral, regional, brotherhood and friendly relationship that is progressively being consolidated and translated into substantive cooperation ties in substantial domains, accounting to 14 signed Agreements and Cooperation MOU. Both of us belong to SADC, Africa Continental Free Trade Area, and OACP. In 2019 both renewed their strong commitment into deepening the existing bilateral and economic ties; enhance engagement in Africa through the signing of three MOUs related to: environment; tourism; and establishment of an Economic Development Board.

4.433. Mauritius investment is present in some of the Mozambique sectors such as logistics, agri-business, textiles, manufacturing and ICT and more other are envisaged as new possible sectors including fisheries; these, just to mention a few.

4.434. It is factual that exports and imports from and for both countries are still limited, but the Governments continue to interact in view to increase trade and investment relations, having no doubts that the Government of Mauritius has for long been encouraging its companies to invest in Mozambique, in view to contribute for development.

4.435. It is our hope that the Government of Mauritius will continue to achieve its long terms objectives of the reforms and development strategies, guided by the assumption that trade can lead to growth and development, and that it can also contribute to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals.

4.436. Despite recognizing that challenges are many, we are very encouraged by the progresses being attained, despite COVID-19 pandemic disease.

4.437. We would be remiss if not use this opportunity to express our gratitude for the commendable work that in a tireless manner, has been carried out by H.E. Usha Dwarka-Canabady, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Mauritius in Geneva, as well as by the Mission's team on the various WTO issues, including the coordination of the African Group on the WTO matters.

4.438. To conclude, we wish Mauritius a successful Trade Policy Review.

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

4.439. Let me start by joining others in welcoming Mr Alan Ganoo and his delegation from the capital, as well as Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady and her Geneva-based team at the fifth Trade Policy Review exercise. I would also like to welcome to thank Ambassador Mailu from Kenya for his insightful introductory remarks delivered this morning. Also, I'm pleased to acknowledge my delegation's appreciation to the Secretariat for the effort in drafting this report.

4.440. As a general remark, it is a pleasure to note that two decades of liberalization reforms have transformed Mauritius into an open economy, Mauritius maintaining low tariffs and a very liberalized trade regime with its partners.

4.441. As stated and in the Secretariat's report, we believe that it's openness to trade is a clear argument for the registered economic success from the recent years and there is a evident connection between the level of development that Mauritius' economy has been able to obtain in the last decade.

4.442. We also commend Mauritius for its efforts to pursue trade facilitation reforms by implementing the TFA Agreement. In this sense, among recent remarkable achievements, the use of the online Mauritius' Trade Easy portal as well as Trade Obstacles Alert Mechanism platform.

4.443. Another important and commendable development registered in the recent years is the transformation of the Mauritian economy from its main manufacturing industries, namely sugar and textiles and clothing, towards a service-oriented economy.

4.444. Since the last TPR, the Secretariat's report notes that the main drivers of growth were the services sector, particularly tourism, financial services, information, and communications technology (ICT) services, and construction. We encourage Mauritius' authorities to further implement policies and tools oriented towards further liberalization and development of the services sector.

4.445. On a different note, we mention that unfortunately since the COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced the tendency towards greater state involvement in the economy, mainly in industries considered critical to the national interest, therefore we encourage Mauritius to reconsider such protectionist tendencies, mainly having into consideration of the forecast for the recovery of economy, which we are quite optimistic. Particularly in the context of the good performance of the touristic industry with the resumption of foreign travel.

4.446. On the bilateral level, Moldova and Mauritius registered very modest trade flows. However, our institutions stand ready to cooperate and strengthen our cooperation in the main sectors of interest.

4.447. On a positive mode, we are very pleased to mention that despite a small delegation, Mauritius participates actively in the work of the WTO, also by presenting timely notifications in most committees. This proves that Mauritius is committed to the multilateral trading system and to the basic principle promoted within this Organization, and we further encourage Mauritius to ensure the

continuity in the submission of the WTO notifications setting a commendable example for peer countries.

4.448. To conclude, I commend Mauritius' delegation participation and contributions to the WTO work under the leadership of Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady, and on behalf of my delegation I wish the Mauritius' delegation interesting engagement in their last day of TPR.

URUGUAY

4.449. Uruguay wishes to extend the warmest welcome to the delegation of Mauritius, headed by the Honourable Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, on the occasion of its fifth Trade Policy Review. We appreciate the remarkable work done by both the Secretariat and Mauritius in preparing the respective reports and we congratulate Ambassador Cleopa Mailu for his high-quality report.

4.450. I would also like to acknowledge Mauritius' commitment to the multilateral trading system as reflected in the outstanding leadership of Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady and her team in the work of the WTO.

4.451. Uruguay would like to congratulate Mauritius on its continued efforts to transform its economy into a services-oriented economy, particularly as a gateway for investment in Africa. We also note with satisfaction that the country's open capital regime and its growing importance as an international investment centre, together with the double taxation treaties that have been signed, have contributed to the development of its financial services.

4.452. Mauritius and Uruguay agree on the great value attached to the WTO and its central role in the rules-based multilateral trading system, as well as the need for meaningful outcomes at the 12th Ministerial Conference. We both recognize that supporting and contributing to the multilateral trading system, enhancing trade cooperation and promoting an inclusive and sustainable trade policy will be key to navigating the post-pandemic economic landscape.

4.453. I would also like to acknowledge Mauritius' leadership in the discussions in the MSME Group to bring together proposals and suggestions that enrich the Group's agenda and work. We encourage Mauritius to co-sponsor the MSME Ministerial Declaration and become a member of the MSME Group.

4.454. In conclusion, we would like to reiterate our appreciation for this new exercise in exchanging views on Mauritius' trade practices, and look forward to continued cooperation on all fronts: bilateral, regional and here at the WTO. Thank you and our best wishes for a successful review.

FIJI ON BEHALF OF THE PACIFIC GROUP

4.455. I make this statement on behalf of the Pacific Group and wish to align ourselves with the ACP Group statement. The Pacific Group warmly welcomes you Honourable Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration, and International Trade, and his delegation to this Trade Policy Review.

4.456. The Pacific Group also acknowledges the two comprehensive reports by the Secretariat and the Government of Mauritius. The Pacific Group especially thanks Mauritius for the high-quality report provided by the Government for this TPR and the excellent presentation made to Members this morning on Mauritius national trade policy. We also thank the Ambassador of Kenya for the analysis of the Mauritius trade policy.

4.457. Mauritius is a valued fellow Member of the ACP in the WTO and its active role as coordinator of the African Group. We particularly acknowledge the important role played by H.E. Ambassador Usha Canabady in this regard.

4.458. As small island developing states the Pacific Group shares many similarities including inherent vulnerabilities that pose barriers to the successful integration of our economies to the world trade system. SIDs are susceptible to global economic shocks, environmental shocks brought on by natural disasters and climate change. The economic impact of the ongoing pandemic in Mauritius

has resulted in the contraction of its GDP by over 14% in 2020. This exacerbates the shared vulnerabilities we face from climate change and natural disasters. As you rightly noted Hon Minister SIDS are susceptible to global economic shocks, environmental shocks brought on by natural disasters as well other shocks like the ongoing global pandemic.

4.459. We therefore underline the significance of the rules based multilateral trading system as providing an open, equitable and transparent trading system that provides certainty, predictability and opportunities for small Members like us.

4.460. The Pacific Group commends Mauritius for the high level of implementation of its WTO obligations including its notifications, the successful implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement and the various trade reforms that has been implementing. This have been driven by its very clear national trade policy and diversification strategy. Despite this, it is noted from the trade statistics provided that trade deficits have accelerated and much of this from the erosion of trade preferences. This has been a long-standing interest of small states like us in the WTO.

4.461. The Pacific Group is nevertheless inspired by the impressive efforts of Mauritius to diversify its economy away from traditional sectors to services and other sectors such as ICT and the blue economy, as well as, to diversify its markets through bilateral and regional trade agreements noting that four of its trade agreements will enter into force this year.

4.462. The WTO must play its part in providing the necessary tools to assist Mauritius successfully implement its trade policies and strategies and address the challenges faced by small Members that are trying their best to implement obligations and diversify their economies.

4.463. As Members that share common interests and challenges, we look forward to maintaining close working relations with Mauritius in the WTO to ensure that WTO rules and facilities are supportive of our trade and our development efforts. The Pacific Group wishes the Mauritius a successful fifth Trade Policy Review.

[FIJI](#)

4.464. Fiji welcomes and congratulates Mauritius and the Honourable Alan Ganoo, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of Mauritius, and we wish also to align our statement with the Pacific and ACP statements as delivered this morning. Fiji also recognises and thank H.E. Dr Cleopa Mailu of Kenya for his valued insights and the hard work of the Secretariat.

4.465. Mauritius remain one of the SIDS countries we as fellow SIDS look up to as a model in view of its solid economic growth and performance over the years, deeply rooted in the fundamental principle of trade, economics, custom reform and no doubt sound quality governance which is why Fiji committed to sign an MOU with Mauritius in 2014 between Investment Fiji and the Mauritian Bureau of Investments which allowed closer collaboration between our two countries on investment initiatives.

4.466. Most notably, the detailed report by Mauritius shows how vulnerable, small islands are in the phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and natural disasters which Small Island economies have to cope with on an annual basis. Despite the sound economic growth experienced, a single event such as the COVID-19 pandemic can easily undermine years of growth.

4.467. In view of Mauritius smallness in economic size and economy of scale, they vested heavily on a wide range of sectors to drive the economy from service, textiles, business, professional and technical services and is diversified even towards competitive niches in the service sector.

4.468. In addition, its reform to facilitate easier access to doing business as indicated in the report supported by the World Bank is a class on its own. The wide range of economic sectors as in Mauritius case prove fundamental to withstand the economic shocks posed by external factors on service and while service sector is disturbed, other key drivers are still operational which many small economies have to learn the hard way from in this pandemic.

4.469. Furthermore, Mauritius and Fiji recognize the significance of the multilateral rules-based system which provides secure, and predictable market access that establishes the basis for a meaningful trade environment. Mauritius has even adopted meaningful and strategic structural reforms as presented by the delegation in this evolving global economy including its high priority in the blue and green economy initiatives as announced by the Honourable Prime Minister in COP26 is highly commendable.

4.470. Fiji looks forward to a continuing partnership with Mauritius and to learning from each other in view of the unprecedented times we are in, especially the road to recovery from the pandemic. It is our hope that international travel is examined and addressed sooner to help rebuild our economies such as a more certain travel environment including the withdrawal of random travel advisories which are not science based that act as barriers to tourism trade and investment.

4.471. In addition, a harmonize recognition of vaccines and test certifications which are a hinderance and barrier to the service sector is also critical and need to be addressed soon to enhance recovery of economies who relying on the service sector. In addition, our economies need mitigation schemes where WTO could work with other international organisations to support and revive small economies to recover efficiently from the pandemic.

4.472. Finally, we congratulate Ambassador Usha Canabady and her solid team in Geneva for their usual dedicated efforts and smooth facilitation of Mauritius review. Fiji wishes the delegation of Mauritius and we wish the delegation of Mauritius a productive review and continued economic growth and success in the years to come.

NAMIBIA

4.473. Madam Chair, Namibia commends your stellar leadership and joins others in congratulating and thanking the Republic of Mauritius and the WTO Secretariat for their comprehensive reports.

4.474. My Delegation further extends our sincere appreciation in welcoming H.E. Mr Alan Ganoo, Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of Mauritius, and his esteemed delegation to this Trade Policy Review session.

4.475. We further wish to thank H.E. Ambassador Usha Canabady, our able African Group Coordinator on WTO matters and her team for all their efforts and hard work. In addition, we thank H.E. Ambassador Dr Cleopa Mailu of Kenya for his insightful comments as the discussant.

4.476. Mauritius being a Member of SADC, shares a common vision with Namibia, towards trade and services and the enhancement of cross border investment in major areas identified under the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan for 2020–2030.

4.477. The efforts by Mauritius on trade liberalization under its trade and investment regime are commendable; efforts are evidently visible through its tariff reduction commitments with a view to achieve economic objectives of the World Trade Organisation by boosting trade and investment as well as expanding market access under AfCFTA. We also applaud Mauritius for being a leader in our SADC region in the sectors of ICT, financial services, and tourism.

4.478. We note the structural reforms implemented since the previous Review, which includes amongst others re-alignment of the Customs Tariff Schedule to the World Customs Organisation HS 2017 version as well as the successful implementation of the online import and export permit system are commendable achievements.

4.479. In conclusion, Namibia is committed to working with Mauritius in the implementation of the Trade Agreements to which Mauritius and Namibia are party and also takes this opportunity to wish the Government of Mauritius a very successful review.

NIGERIA

4.480. Nigeria congratulates Mauritius on their fifth Trade Policy Review. We warmly welcome the delegation of Mauritius, led by Mr Alan Ganoo, the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional

Integration and International Trade. We wish to thank the Secretariat for their comprehensive report and to express our appreciation to the Chair for the excellent Introductory remarks. We also commend the discussant, H.E. Ambassador, Cleopa Kilonzo Mailu from Kenya for his insightful comments.

4.481. Let me also, at the outset, thank H.E. Ambassador, Usha Dwarka-Canabady, Permanent Representative of Mauritius, Geneva, for her active role in this review exercise and for her tireless efforts in coordinating the African Group in the on-going Negotiations at the WTO.

4.482. We note in the report, that Mauritius is one of the most economically affected countries in the world due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in a 15% drop in GDP and a decline in per capita income to USD 8,700 in 2020. However, we commend Mauritius for the various measures put in place to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on Mauritius economy and population.

4.483. Nigeria recognises Mauritius ambitious reform agendas on several fronts and the successful transition from a monocrop to a well-diversified economy which to a large extent has strengthened the resilience of the economy to external shocks. We commend the remarkable progress and performance of the manufacturing sector which has contributed the highest concentration of jobs in the textile and apparel industry. We appreciate Mauritius steadfast commitment towards the improvement in its ease of doing business ranking from 20th to 13th position worldwide and 1st position in Africa.

4.484. We applaud the massive infrastructural development, making Mauritius the first ever Small Island Developing Country (SIDs) to launch a light rail system. We are pleased to note that Mauritius has been granted the world's first ever global safety and hygiene stamp of approval for safety protocols by the World Tourism Travel Council. The introduction of a "Long Stay Tourism Strategy" will attract more tourist and will increase growth of the tourism sector. We also recognize the ongoing transformation in the maritime sector with the setting up of Maritime Single Window.

4.485. Consequently, Nigeria acknowledges Mauritius active contribution to the Work of the WTO through her active participation in the various ongoing discussions and negotiations at the WTO. These include participation in the joint statement initiatives on electronic commerce, investment facilitation for development, the discussions on MSMEs, the discussions on Services Domestic Regulations, the Information Technology Agreement (ITA), Trade in Services Agreement (TISA) negotiations, negotiations on fisheries subsidies, among others. We observe Mauritius is up to date in terms of compliance with its notification's obligations, with a view to increasing transparency in its trade regime.

4.486. We particularly note Mauritius commitment in creating a global network of Bilateral trade initiatives, economic partnership Agreement and RTAs towards consolidating economic and trade ties with its trading partners. This signifies Mauritius commitment to promoting free trade.

4.487. Nigeria recognises that Mauritius had launched a new trade obstacles alert mechanism platform, that allows operators to report exporting and importing obstacles, this is highly commendable. We acknowledge Mauritius liberalization reforms and its openness to trade which has attributed to its economic success and improved market access on key markets for both goods and services. The number of tariff lines attracting 0% of Customs duty account to 93.82% of the tariff lines as of 1 January 2021, this shows Mauritius commitment to openness to trade.

4.488. To conclude, Nigeria remains fully committed to the objectives of the WTO and looks forward to strengthening our partnership with Mauritius and all other Member States to reinforce the multilateral trading system. We wish Mauritius a very successful and productive Trade Policy Review.

THE GAMBIA

4.489. My delegation aligns with the statements by the ACP, African Group and LDCs. We join Excellencies in welcoming Honourable Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade and his delegation.

4.490. We thank the Government of Mauritius for the ambitious reform agenda it has undertaken to improve its trade and business environment resulting in its classification as a high-income country by the World Bank in July 2020.

4.491. We applaud Mauritius and the WTO Secretariat for their comprehensive reports, as well as our Brother Excellency Ambassador Claopa Kilonzo Mailu of Kenya for a succinct and insightful framing of the Mauritius TPR as discussant.

4.492. We applaud Mauritius for the ambitious reform agenda it has undertaken to improve its trade and business environment resulting in its classifications as a high-income country by the World Bank in July 2020.

4.493. We note with keen interest that Mauritius has successfully transformed its economy away from its main manufacturing industries towards a service-oriented economy.

4.494. We appreciate Mauritius introduction of an Africa Strategy to encourage Mauritian entrepreneurs to invest in other African countries is highly commendable as we move towards the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area.

4.495. Here in Geneva, Mauritius under the brilliant leadership of our Sister Excellency Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady and delegation plays an active and thoughtful leadership role in the WTO ecosystem as Coordinator of the African Group and in bilateral engagements with our delegation and other delegations.

4.496. We welcome the progressive strides registered by Mauritius and her stepped up efforts in revitalising her economy despite challenges faced during the Pandemic and pursuits of resilience post pandemic.

4.497. We note with keen interest and appreciate Mauritius' market-based economy and focused on strengthening her institutions, substantive contributions and support to the Africa wide continental efforts and Excellency Usha's relentless efforts, commitment and thoughtful voice for multilateralism.

4.498. The Gambia delegation is keenly interested in Mauritius innovations on Special Economic Zones, competitiveness for sustainable economic development and strides to build the digital platform economy and services.

4.499. We applaud Mauritius in its efforts to brake trade barriers, putting in place smart reforms and trade policy regimes as captures in the Review.

4.500. We take note with keen interest in Mauritius pragmatic regulatory frameworks, digitalisations transformation efforts, stepping up the build up on the IP ecosystem with sustainable development at the center; and their connectedness to trade, economic revitalisation and strengthening the trade multilateralism system, reinvigorating knowledge capabilities.

4.501. My delegation welcomed opportunities to further strengthen and open newest bilateral initiatives and collaboration for trade, investments and build up of the core digital infrastructure to facilitate ushering in, value crating integrated and interoperable digital trade platforms and services, e-commerce infrastructure and services, FinTech, innovative and affordable solutions to connectivity challenges, cyber security capabilities and deployment, e-enable supply chains, AgTech, digital heath, and virtual education.

4.502. Further, we look forwards to further engagements in efforts to build Africa's digital platform economy and services; capacity for IP for sustainable development, wealth creation for SME's and MSME's, skill development through partnerships with our learning institutions for scaling up of the appropriate and much needed capacity, competencies in emerging technologies and talent.

4.503. Finally, my delegation looks forward to deepening our bilateral relationships with Mauritius on areas of mutual interest, and to continue our collective efforts to strengthen the multilateral trading system for the benefit of our people. We wish the delegation of Mauritius a successful fifth Trade Policy Review.

BANGLADESH

4.504. At the outset, the Bangladesh delegation welcomes H.E. Mr Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade and head of delegation, for his introductory presentation at the fifth Trade Policy Review of Mauritius. The Bangladesh delegation also thanks H.E. Dr Cleopa Mailu of Kenya for his insightful discussions. Our sincere appreciation also goes to the Government of Mauritius and to the WTO Secretariat for the comprehensive reports.

4.505. As one of the friendly countries, Bangladesh is delighted to note the great strides and considerable progress that Mauritius has made during the review period. We see that the prudent macroeconomic measures adopted by the country have resulted in impressive economic growth and remarkable improvement in almost all indices.

4.506. The report states about two decades of liberalization reforms have transformed Mauritius into an almost duty-free economy. Its openness to trade has been one of the reasons behind its economic success.

4.507. Over the review period, we gather that the main drivers of growth were the services sector, particularly tourism, financial services, information and communications technology (ICT) services, and construction. The transformation of the Mauritian economy from its main manufacturing industries, namely sugar, textiles, and clothing, towards a service-oriented economy particularly as an investment gateway to Africa noteworthy.

4.508. We are pleased to note that the Government of Mauritius pursued ambitious reform agenda to improve the trade, investment, and business environment, and invested massively in infrastructure development. The reform has resulted in a substantial improvement in the case of the Doing Business ranking from 20th in 2014 to 13th position in the world in 2019.

4.509. Mauritius implemented the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and reduced MFN tariffs for several products. It has liberalized its trade regime for goods with a generally low tariff protection and has emphasized more on trade in services.

4.510. We congratulate the Government, the people of Mauritius for the country being classified by the World Bank as a high-income country based on its per capita GNI. Of course, COVID pandemic affected its further progress, as has been the case with other developing countries.

4.511. Bangladesh and Mauritius enjoy a friendly and mutually beneficial relationship; our bilateral ties have further bolstered with the high-level visits from both sides. Establishing Bangladesh High Commission in Port Louis has also contributed to the deepening of relations between the two countries. Both countries share a common history, heritage, and culture; both of our Nations faced challenges of climate change and natural disasters.

4.512. Bangladesh considers Mauritius as a like-minded country, sharing common views on various international issues. The two countries are members of the Indian Ocean Rim Association and the Commonwealth of Nations.

4.513. Though trade volume between the two countries is not significantly large, Mauritius' exports to Bangladesh stand at USD 15.69 million and imports from Bangladesh USD 11.21 million during 2020. It has the potential to grow considerably.

4.514. Our willingness to enhance economic cooperation is well reflected in signing an MOU between our two countries not too long ago.

4.515. Mauritius is a host country of a sizable Bangladeshi migrant work force, including women work force.

4.516. In terms of exports, Bangladeshi garments and handicrafts have good prospect in the Mauritian market on which our businesses are working. We have started exporting pharmaceutical products to Mauritius, which are key additions to our trade basket.

4.517. To conclude, we wish the delegation of Mauritius a productive and successful TPR. My delegation will continue to work closely with the Mauritius delegation, led by Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady, to strengthen the multilateral trading system, as we assist our countries to enhance our bilateral trade ties, as well as work together to pursue for a rules-based, fair, and equitable multilateral trading system.

UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

4.518. The delegation of the United Republic of Tanzania would like to welcome H.E. Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of Mauritius, in this meeting and wishes him and his delegation a successful fifth Trade Policy Review.

4.519. This review is taking place at a time when the world is facing insurmountable challenges of COVID-19, which has affected the movement of people, goods, and services across the globe as well as forcing Governments to shift the priorities to realign and address immediate needs. Irrespective of the current situation and challenges, Mauritius Government has accepted its trade policy to be reviewed within the planned cycle.

4.520. The delegation of the United Republic of Tanzania thanks the Government of Mauritius and the Secretariat for having a timely available and comprehensive report in connection to this review. Similarly, we appreciate our brother from the East African Community, H.E. Dr Cleopa Mailu, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Kenya to the WTO, for offering himself as a discussant. His well-articulated address this morning has elucidated more our understanding of the trade policy under the review.

4.521. Further, we appreciate the continued contribution of Mauritius in the multilateral trade rules making in the WTO through its delegation led ably by Ambassador H.E. Usha Dwarka-Canabady, current coordinator of the African Group.

4.522. The United Republic of Tanzania commends on the social and economic progress achieved so far by our brotherly country Mauritius over the period of this review. Notably, under the period of this review, the Government of Mauritius has undertaken deliberate efforts in laying a good environment for trade and investment to thrive in the country.

4.523. As alluded in the report, Mauritius has undertaken reforms which include the review and enactment of a number of trade and investment-related legislations. As a result, the country is among the highest liberalized economies in Africa and in the world. It has done so to foster economic growth and improve the welfare of its citizens.

4.524. For a number of years, especially before COVID-19 pandemic, Mauritius' services sector, and particularly tourism, has been the best performer in Africa. Secondly, with the determination and zeal of the Mauritian Government, the sector will return to its prosperity as COVID-19 diminishes.

4.525. Mauritius, as a fellow member State of the Southern African Development Community, is our traditional trading partner in Africa and we have seen the bilateral trade steadily growing year after year, particularly in agricultural products and commodities.

4.526. Both countries are taking considerable efforts to link the private sector and businesses of the two brotherly countries with the view to boost trade and investment cooperation.

4.527. Tanzania would like to encourage the Government of Mauritius to continue with efforts of bringing back its country's economic growth to the levels which were maintained prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

4.528. However, as mentioned by the Honourable Minister this morning, our efforts will certainly need to be complemented in various formats from support of other partners.

4.529. My delegation would like to assure the delegation of Mauritius that the United Republic of Tanzania will continue to cooperate with Mauritius at bilateral, regional, multilateral fronts in advancing the shared social and economic interest of the two brotherly countries. With these brief

remarks, the delegation of the United Republic of Tanzania, once again, wishes the delegation of Mauritius a very successful Trade Policy Review.

BURKINA FASO

4.530. Burkina Faso extends a warm welcome to the distinguished high-level delegation of Mauritius, led by the Honourable Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, and thanks it for the presentation of its national report.

4.531. This comprehensive report, which shows the efforts of the Government of Mauritius to improve its legal and institutional environment, with a view to making it more conducive to investment and to bilateral, regional and international trade, has the full support of my delegation.

4.532. As an illustrative example, Burkina Faso is pleased to note that, with regard to the investment climate and simplification of regulatory procedures, Mauritius ranks first in Africa. We hail this performance and encourage Maurice in this approach.

4.533. However, Burkina Faso notes that tourism, which is one of the key sectors on which the country's economy is based, has been severely affected by the COVID-19 health crisis. Indeed, with the advent of the pandemic, tourist arrivals and tourism revenue fell in 2020, with the contraction in the accommodation and catering service subsector estimated at 66% for that year. As for real GDP, it recorded a decline of 14.9% in 2020.

4.534. Despite this external shock, the country has remained resilient thanks to the adoption of appropriate measures to face the crisis and to revitalize its economy. My delegation salutes these achievements and encourages Mauritius in its post-COVID-19 recovery measures.

4.535. Burkina Faso also commends Mauritius' sustained commitment to the WTO multilateral trading system, including the various responsibilities, past and present, assumed by the country in the bodies of this organization. In particular, it commends the leadership of Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady, coordinator of the positions of the African Group at the WTO.

4.536. Lastly, Burkina Faso thanks the WTO Secretariat for organizing this session and preparing the working documents, and is grateful for the detailed presentation made by the Ambassador of Kenya to inform Members about Mauritius' trade regime.

4.537. In closing, Burkina Faso hopes that Mauritius will derive the best possible benefit from this exercise and wishes it every success in its Trade Policy Review.

GHANA

4.538. At the outset, Ghana joins others in congratulate Mauritius on its third Trade Policy Review, we also welcome the delegation of Mauritius led by Honourable Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, to Geneva. My delegation further expresses our deep appreciation for the reports prepared, as well as to the discussant H.E. Dr Cleopa Mailu from Kenya for his excellent framing of the issues for our discussion today.

4.539. Firstly, Ghana takes note of the fact that prior to COVID-19 the average GDP growth rate in Mauritius, since their last Trade Policy Review in 2014, was 3.5% annually, well above the world average. However, due to the pandemic, the Mauritian economy was severely affected: the GDP contracted by 14.9% in 2020 while public sector gross debts reached 84.3% of GDP at the end of December 2020.

4.540. Ghana further takes note and commends the Mauritian Government for the pursuit of an ambitious reform agenda to improve the trade, investment, and business environment by massively investing in infrastructure development that resulted in a substantial improvement in the Ease of Doing Business ranking, from 20th in 2014 to 13th position in the world in 2019. And the first-ever light rail system in a small island developing country, which was launched in Mauritius in 2019.

4.541. We again take note that, over the review period, the main drivers of growth were the services sector, particularly tourism, financial services, information and communications technology (ICT) services, and construction. The transformation of the Mauritian economy away from its main manufacturing industries, namely sugar and textiles and clothing, towards a service-oriented economy continued, particularly as an investment gateway to Africa. It is sad to that Mauritius' status may be reviewed in view of the impact of COVID-19 on the economy.

4.542. Secondly, on the multilateral front, Ghana welcomes Mauritius' continued commitment to the WTO. Mauritius participates actively in the work of the WTO with timely notifications and adding transparency to its trade regime. Mauritius again continues to pursue active trade diplomacy through the East African Community tripartite agreement concluded in 2015, the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement in 2019. It also started negotiations on a comprehensive economic partnership agreement with the European Union also in 2019.

4.543. Thirdly, on the bilateral front, the relations between Ghana and Mauritius have been longstanding and cordial. Figures regarding trade in goods are relatively low. The two countries, however, embarked on a new chapter of cooperation with the signing of a Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement in 2017. The Agreement was signed by the Mauritian Prime Minister and the Vice-President of Ghana, H.E. Dr Bawumia as Chief Guest on the occasion of 49th anniversary of the independence and 25th anniversary of the Republic of Mauritius.

4.544. Other areas of cooperation included the setting-up of a Joint Trade and Investment Committee, the conclusion of the MOU between the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry and that of Ghana for the setting-up a Business Council, the ICT sector, the handicraft sector, the health sector with the possibility of recruitment of Mauritian health practitioners in Ghana, and the assistance of Ghana for the setting-up of a Slavery Museum in Mauritius.

4.545. In conclusion, Ghana stands ready to further deepen our bilateral relation by expediting the implementation of all outstanding commitments. My delegation wishes the Mauritian delegation a successful trade review.

5 REPLIES BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF MAURITIUS AND ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

5.1. Chair, I wish to thank you and the discussant, His Excellency Dr Cleopa Mailu for the detailed comments and interesting questions. This has helped us frame our responses in a structured manner and clarify many issues. I wish to also place on record our thanks and appreciation to all the Members who took the floor on 9 November, and also to those Members who submitted prior questions on both the Secretariat and the Government reports.

5.2. We are gratified by the general acknowledgment that Mauritius has made significant progress since the last Review particularly in the area of business and trade facilitation and our transition from a monocrop to a service-based economy which as evidenced by the share of services in our GDP which currently stands at 70%.

5.3. We also appreciate the recognition of Mauritius being a vibrant democracy where good governance, the rule of law and transparency are important values which are constantly promoted.

5.4. Many statements highlighted the impacts of the COVID-19 on the Mauritian economy and the measures taken by the Government to address them and to re-boot the economy. Indeed, Mauritius has been one of the hardest hit with a contraction of its GDP by 14.9% in 2020.

5.5. The most affected sector was tourism with a drop of 80% in output. Unemployment rate increased to 9.2% from 6.7% in 2019. The current account deficit soared to MUR 54.4 billion (12.7% of GDP) in 2020 compared to MUR 25.7 billion (5.1% of GDP) in 2019. The public sector debt reached 83.4% of GDP at the end June 2020 compared to 65% at end of June 2019.

5.6. These show the exposure of the country to external shocks given that it is an open economy, and fully integrated in the global economy. As a small Island developing country, it has no option than to pursue an open economy policy and to rely on international trade for its development. However, it remains vulnerable to frictions in the global economy.

5.7. The total COVID-19 response package which Government had to disburse to mitigate the impact of the pandemic stands at 32% of GDP, and according to the World Bank is the fourth largest in the world.

5.8. The main action to activate the recovery phase is the full opening of our borders so as to get the tourism industry going again. In fact, as from the 1 October 2021, borders were fully opened. Government initiated a massive vaccination programme which started in January 2021. So far, over 65% of our population has been fully vaccinated with two doses, while 90% of the population has received one dose. The vaccination campaign for those between 15-17 years has already started. Furthermore, a booster dose is also currently being administered.

5.9. To reboot the economy, the Plan de Relance de L'Investissement et de l'Économie was unveiled in the 2020-2021 Budget Speech. Our strategy on economic recovery and the future development path rests on three main pillars namely: (a) giving an exceptional boost to investment; (b) shaping a new economic architecture; and (c) restoring confidence.

5.10. This would be achieved through, inter-alia, a boost to the construction sector; rebuilding our local manufacturing fabric; supporting our tourism industry; consolidating our financial services sector; stimulating the development of data economy; diversifying the "blue economy" value-chain; building a strong biomedical and pharmaceutical industry as well as reinforcing our regional partnerships.

5.11. The Plan would re-engineer the industrial fabric and further improve the ease of doing business. The aim is to increase the attractiveness of Mauritius as an investment destination.

5.12. The new economic architecture also focuses on investment in the green economy and development of a pharmaceutical industry and biotechnology. A target has been set to produce 60% of the country's needs from green sources by 2030.

5.13. The period under review also demonstrates the consolidation of the services sectors in our economy comprising mainly tourism, ICT/BPO and financial services. The BPO sector now accounts

for around 63% of total employment. Regarding financial services, various measures have been taken to reinforce the credibility of the Mauritius jurisdiction through enactment of appropriate measures to combat money laundering and terrorism financing. Moreover, various initiatives have been put in place to promote Mauritius as a regional FinTech centre. A framework on green bond issuance and sustainable financing has also been elaborated by the Bank of Mauritius.

5.14. In response to the global emergence of e-commerce, Mauritius has put in place an effective physical and soft infrastructure (for example data centres, e-payment gateways, submarine cables, optical fibre connectivity, 5G services, domestic legislation) to promote e-commerce transactions.

5.15. Several Member States asked questions relating to our investment climate and incentive regimes in the various sectors of the economy.

5.16. As highlighted in several statements, Mauritius provides a stable political and social environment, coupled with an effective judicial system, sound regulations and institutions which have secured Mauritius a favourable risk and investment climate position.

5.17. Moreover, Mauritius has a very straightforward, transparent and competitive tax regime and is known to be a very cooperative jurisdiction, compliant with international best practices. Mauritius understands the importance of cooperation to combat Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing, tax evasion and other malpractices. It has, in this regard, all the necessary elements in place to achieve effective exchange of information and collaboration with respective authorities worldwide.

5.18. That said, I wish to re-emphasize that Mauritius is a Small Island Developing economy, with all the characteristics specific to SIDS, in particular a restricted internal Market, limited factor endowment such as availability of raw materials and production inputs, and the tyranny of distance from our main markets. In these circumstances, it is important for the Government to attract investments through support measures. These support measures are granted on a non-discriminatory basis, in compliance with international standards.

5.19. In terms of our notification obligations, it is confirmed from the Secretariat report that Mauritius has been fulfilling its notification requirements on a regular basis.

5.20. Questions received from WTO Members also referred to the government procurement practices in Mauritius and whether there are plans to join the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA).

5.21. Mauritius has a very transparent system of government procurement, with a substantial share sourced through open international bidding. Tenders for open bidding are duly advertised and posted on the website of the Central Procurement Board. We have a centralized electronic procurement system. We have provided detailed responses to questions posed in writing by some Members with regard to procurement by the State Trading Corporation during the pandemic for medical related products.

5.22. In terms of promoting transparency and good governance at the State Trading Corporation (STC), the following measures have, inter-alia been taken: a risk assessment exercise on corruption is being undertaken in collaboration with the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC); the STC is also working with the Mauritius Institute of Directors to improve corporate governance; and its procurement procedures are being updated, which includes permanent publication on the STC's website of the specifications of products which are imported.

5.23. In addition, the emergency procurement procedures have now been revamped through new regulations made under the Public Procurement Act.

5.24. Regarding accession to the GPA, Mauritius will consider joining as an observer first at the appropriate time.

5.25. In relation to Intellectual Property matters, the new Comprehensive Industrial Property Act is expected to enter into force on 1 January 2022. Thereafter, the existing Intellectual Property Office will be re-structured to examine application for new IPRs not previously covered such as Geographical Indications and new plant varieties. We are thankful to the EU for providing assistance

to build the capacity of our officers. This will no doubt contribute in further improving our ranking in the Global Innovation Index.

5.26. Mauritius will subsequently accede to a number of WIPO administered treaties. The accession procedure to join the PCT, the Madrid Protocol on trademarks and The Hague Convention on Industrial Designs will be initiated upon the new law entering into force.

5.27. Questions were also asked regarding specific measures taken by Government to encourage women participation in trade. Mauritius was a signatory of the Buenos Aires Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment and will adhere to any new Declaration on this issue at MC12.

5.28. It has made progress in delivering on its commitment to gender equality in trade by actively engaging women in policy consultations and building the capacity of the ministry responsible for trade on gender issues.

5.29. Since 2019, the Mauritian Government has set up financing programmes targeting women entrepreneurs, providing them with financial assistance such as the Women Entrepreneur Loan Scheme of the Development Bank of Mauritius, a Technology and Innovation Scheme (TINNS) for women entrepreneurs.

5.30. Furthermore, the Development Bank of Mauritius provides special loans for women entrepreneurs at preferential interest rate and without collateral securities.

5.31. A set of questions related to Market Access issues, both for goods and services. As can be noted from the report, the average tariff dropped from 1.95% in 2013 to 1.19% in 2020, thus making Mauritius a low tariff country. We have joined both the ITA I and II which increased our binding commitments. We stand ready to further increase these commitments in the context of market access negotiations.

5.32. Regarding the services sector, our commitments to open up is evidenced by the various FTAs we have concluded covering some 70% of the world population, which also include services. We are in favour of an ambitious Agreement on Trade in Services at the WTO, which was one of the reasons for joining the TISA negotiations.

5.33. On the query on whether Mauritius would extend preferences for specific products granted under its FTAs to other WTO Members, such a possibility could be explored on the basis of commitments that the other partners would be willing to undertake in the context of a bilateral Free Trade Agreements with Mauritius.

5.34. I would also like to underline the fact that Mauritius is open to negotiate comprehensive Free Trade Areas with interested countries, with a view to eliminating barriers to trade in goods and services.

5.35. Some WTO Members commented on the increasing involvement of Government in business activities. While this may be a situation which has been dictated by current imperatives, including the COVID-19 pandemic, Mauritius remains a fully open and market-oriented economy as can be evidenced by the 13th position of Mauritius in the Economic Freedom Index of the Heritage Foundation.

5.36. Before concluding, I wish to again reiterate our thanks to the Secretariat, to the discussant, His Excellency Dr Cleopa Mailu and to WTO Members for their constructive remarks and comments. We have responded to all the 170 written questions and shall be glad to provide any additional information.

5.37. I want to re-emphasize the unflinching commitment of Mauritius to the objectives of this organisation and to the multilateral trading system. We shall continue to engage constructively in the work of the WTO and sincerely hope that the forthcoming MC12 delivers concrete outcomes, in particular in Agriculture, fisheries subsidies and COVID-19 related issues. Mauritius will also adhere to the Initiative on Electronic Commerce as requested by some Members. We shall also positively consider the request to connect our Single Window to those of other WTO Members, should this be technically feasible, and taking into account security and confidentiality aspects.

DISCUSSANT

5.38. I wish to take this opportunity to, once again, commend the delegation of Mauritius, led by the Honourable Mr Alan Ganoo, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, for the valuable contribution and active engagement in this Review. This Review has also elicited immense interest from many Members, and I commend you all for your commentaries and inquiries during the review.

5.39. It has indeed, been an intense engagement, and having listened keenly to the interventions, I would like to share my thoughts and conclusions from the discussions.

5.40. First, it is apparent that the COVID-19 pandemic has reversed the gains made by many economies, Mauritius being no exception. Despite this drawback, participants acknowledged and commended Mauritius for its efforts to not only mitigate the adverse impact of the pandemic on its social and economic wellbeing, but also for deploying measures to ensure that it emerges stronger from the pandemic.

5.41. Participants also acknowledged and commended Mauritius for maintaining a market-based economy with a strong, dynamic private sector, resulting in the country being ranked highest in Africa in openness and globally on ease of doing business.

5.42. Mauritius' active participation at the WTO cannot be gainsaid. It is the current coordinator of the African Group, and I wish to join Members in commending Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady, the Permanent Representative and her team of dedicated experts for steering the African Group during this challenging period at the multilateral trading system, characterized by the COVID-19 pandemic and protracted negotiations even as we prepare for the 12th Ministerial Conference.

5.43. At the regional level, Mauritius has been recognized as being active in engagements at the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). Regional economic integration endeavours have contributed to improving Mauritius' market access and competitiveness, leading to the gradual transformation of its economy from a monocrop, and away from sugar, and textiles and clothing to a more dynamic service sector.

5.44. Lastly, I would like to say that my participation as the discussant in this Review has been a very enlightening experience for me. It has drawn my attention to the very interesting opportunities offered by Mauritius to its trading partners, and to the lessons and practices offered regarding the common objective we have, as developing countries, of moving forward along the path of economic growth, social inclusion, and well-being for our peoples.

5.45. I would like to conclude by recalling my earlier remarks and by encouraging Mauritius to keep up with its product diversification and economic transformation, even as it addresses some of the issues raised by Members during this Review.

UNITED KINGDOM

5.46. The United Kingdom would like to thank The Honourable Mr Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, for attending this important meeting today and for giving the opening remarks on behalf of Mauritius. We are pleased that Mauritius has engaged in the Trade Policy Review process in a constructive and transparent way. We also note Mauritius' significant and successful effort to respond to the Financial Action Task Force's recommendations. The UK provided technical expertise in support of this work.

5.47. The UK and Mauritius are bound together by a long history, including through our membership of the Commonwealth. We would like to thank Ambassador Dwarka-Canabady for her role as coordinator of the African Group and for the close working relationship that we have with her and her Mission here in Geneva.

5.48. We welcome the steps Mauritius has taken to implement the Trade Facilitation Agreement, including the amending of several rules relating to customs, as well as setting up a National Trade Facilitation Committee.

5.49. Mauritius should be applauded also for the innovative approach and leadership they are showing with regards to services trade for developing countries, including through their participation in the Domestic Regulation Joint Statement Initiative. The UK and Mauritius both recognise the clear positive effects that increasing the integration of developing countries into the global services trade can have, in particular for Small Island Developing States.

5.50. Since the beginning of this year, the UK's trade with Mauritius has been underpinned by the UK – Eastern and Southern Africa Economic Partnership Agreement. We are pleased that the UK is the second largest market for Mauritius' exports, particularly in goods trade.

5.51. The UK thanks Mauritius for noting an example of the support the UK has provided to Mauritius through our Aid-for-Trade portfolio. We are delighted that a letter of intent for the opening of a SheTrades Hub in Mauritius was signed last week and look forward to working with the First Lady to make it a success.

5.52. The UK looks forward to working with Mauritius on areas of mutual interest in the coming months and years, with a focus on financial services, Climate technology, Cyber and education.

EUROPEAN UNION

5.53. On behalf of the EU, I would like to thank the Honourable Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, H.E. Usha Dwarka-Canabady and the Mauritius team for the comprehensive overview of the situation in their country and the severe impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Mauritian economy. The European Union would also like to thank the Mauritius Delegation for the replies provided to our questions. We do not have follow-up questions.

5.54. The EU believes that the exchanges on Tuesday illustrate the value of the Trade Policy Review Mechanism in the WTO. A large and diverse number of WTO Members have made statements on the TPR of Mauritius, which shows the interests of Members on what is happening in the country.

5.55. The EU and several Members recognized the efforts put by the Government of Mauritius to ensure sustainable growth and commended Mauritius on the significant progress achieved since the last Review as well as the important economic transformation in Mauritius over the last few years. We welcome the sound business regulatory framework and good investment climate and encourage further efforts of Mauritius in transforming its economy towards a service-oriented economy.

5.56. The EU appreciates the active role of Mauritius in the WTO in both the multilateral and plurilateral work. We encourage Mauritius to join the various environmental initiatives, including the Trade and Environmental Sustainability Structured Discussions (TESSD), and the Multi-Party Interim Appeal Arbitration Arrangement (MPIA).

5.57. In conclusion, the EU would like to thank the delegation of Mauritius for its active participation in this Trade Policy Review exercise and its commitment to the WTO. We look forward to our continued cooperation.

6 CONCLUDING REMARKS BY THE CHAIRPERSON

6.1. In her concluding remarks, the Chairperson indicated that the fifth Trade Policy Review of Mauritius has offered a unique framework for discussions of its trade and related policies, practices and developments since its previous Review in 2014. Comprehensive reports by the WTO Secretariat; the Government of Mauritius, a total of 174 advance written questions from Members, insightful comments by our discussant, Ambassador Cleopa Mailu, as well as valuable interventions by Members, have contributed to the success of this two-day meeting.

6.2. She expressed her appreciation to the high-level delegation of Mauritius, led by Hon. Mr Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, which includes H.E. Ambassador Usha Dwarka Canabady, Permanent Representative of Mauritius to the WTO. Moreover, she expressed gratitude to the discussant and to the 52 delegations that took the floor during this meeting.

6.3. Members recognized that Mauritius' openness to trade and its stable and robust democratic system have contributed to its economic success in recent years, with GDP growth averaging 3.6% per year from 2014 to 2019. In fact, about two decades of liberalizing reforms have transformed Mauritius into an almost duty-free economy, with the notable exception of sugar on which MFN tariff rates reach 100%.

6.4. They noted that the reforms undertaken since 2014 have further diversified the economy away from manufacturing activities, mainly sugar and textiles and clothing, towards a service-oriented economy, financial services in particular. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the related global measures, including lockdowns and closures of businesses and borders, its GDP declined by 15% in 2020.

6.5. Members asked about Mauritius' COVID-19 Recovery Programme and expressed the hope that an expected good performance by the tourism industry, with the resumption of foreign travel, would contribute to the recovery of the economy.

6.6. They sought information about Mauritius' tax policies and practices in its "Global Business" sector that dominates its financial services, and about actions to harness the potential of its "blue economy".

6.7. Members commended Mauritius for its long-lasting support to the multilateral trading system, and for meeting most of its WTO notification obligations. They noted that Mauritius actively participates in regional trade agreements (e.g. COMESA, SADC, African Continental Free Trade Agreement); and that the country has recently concluded free trade agreements with China, India, and the United Kingdom.

6.8. They sought clarification about the three components of Mauritius' strategy on Africa, i.e., Mauritius as a gateway to Africa for trade; Mauritius as a gateway to Africa for investment; and direct investment by Mauritius in other African countries. Questions were asked about Mauritius' reliance on Double Taxation Avoidance treaties, women's participation in trade, and Mauritius' policies on e-commerce and special economic zones.

6.9. Turning to specific trade measures, many Members praised Mauritius for having removed non-automatic import licensing procedures, although for some sensitive agricultural products the import permit system is still used for self-sufficiency purposes. They congratulated Mauritius for having largely implemented the Trade Facilitation Agreement, including the Mauritius TradeLink Single Window system, and they showed interest in its Trade Obstacles Alert Mechanism. Clarification was sought about customs valuation practices regarding used machinery, equipment and second-hand motor vehicles.

6.10. Members noted that the pandemic has reinforced the State participation in economic activities as already stressed during the previous review, and sought further clarification about transparency and accountability of the State Trading Corporation and of the new Mauritius Investment Corporation. Some Members encouraged Mauritius to join the WTO Government Procurement Agreement. Several questions concerned the nature of various domestic support measures and export subsidy schemes, as well as the new Export Credit Insurance Scheme. Regarding SPS

measures, some asked about the state of the review of the Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) Act.

6.11. Members were appreciative of steps taken by Mauritius to strengthen its intellectual property rights regime and increase its participation in related treaties. Clarifications were sought regarding the setting-up of the Mauritius Society of Authors; the implementation of the new Industrial Property Act; and about plans to join WIPO treaties and the International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants. Some asked for information on seized counterfeit goods, and on measures against Internet piracy.

6.12. Much interest was expressed in Mauritius' agriculture and fisheries policies. Questions focused on the government's recent strategy to increase self-sufficiency; the National Agri-Food Development Programme; the Agricultural Marketing Board's operations; and on sugar tariffs and new preferential tariff quotas on sugar. Participants asked about fisheries management issues, and about plans to increase the share of industry in the country's GDP.

6.13. Members commended Mauritius on the general openness of its services sector and suggested that its GATS commitment be upgraded. They asked about incentives for services providers, including financial technology companies; about the openness of port operations to foreign entities; about market access in airport ground handling services; and whether an economic needs test is required for foreign telecom providers. Finally, interest was expressed in the new incentives and licensing requirements for foreigners in the tourism sector.

6.14. Members have shown a keen interest in Mauritius' trade and related policies, and in its participation in the WTO. They noted that the strong resilience so far shown by the Mauritian economy provides a basis for optimism for a prompt post-pandemic recovery. The Chairperson encouraged Mauritius to reflect on Members' suggestions and concerns while formulating its coming reforms. This will surely strengthen its recovery prospects.

6.15. Trade Policy Review of Mauritius was successfully concluded following Members' appreciation of the oral and written responses provided by the Mauritian delegation to their questions and looked forward to receiving further written responses to any outstanding and follow up questions within one month.

7 ADOPTION OF TPRB'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021

CHAIRPERSON

7.1. I would now like to ask delegations to consider the TPRB's Annual Report for 2021, which was initially distributed on 21 October 2021 in document WT/TPR/W/196. We had set a deadline of 29 October for comments and until that day we have received none.

7.2. However, I am informed that there was a typographical error at page 1 paragraph 2, regarding the total number of reviews the TPRDB will have conducted by the end of this year, which is 527 instead of 526. I assure Members that the Secretariat will correct this in the final version.

7.3. The floor is now open if any delegation would like to speak. Otherwise, I propose the adoption of the Annual Report as contained in the final version of document WT/TPR/W/196.

7.4. With this, I declare the meeting closed. I thank you all for your participation and please note that the next meeting of the Trade Policy Review Body will be held on 17 and 19 November, when the TPRB will discuss the TPR of Oman.
