



Joint Statement by BRICS Trade Ministers on Multilateral Trading System and the WTO Reform

Reaffirming our support for a transparent, open, inclusive and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system, as embodied in the World Trade Organization;

Emphasizing the central role of the WTO in promoting predictability, stability and legal certainty for international trade;

Striving to work together to keep our markets open and promote free, predictable and rules-based trade;

Acknowledging the need to collectively pursue a necessary WTO reform with the aim of making the WTO more resilient and effective in addressing global economic challenges, including economic and trade consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as addressing imbalances and promoting inclusive growth and development;

We hereby declare the following:

It's critical that all WTO Members avoid unilateral and protectionist measures that run counter to the spirit and rules of the WTO.

We urge all WTO Members to abide by WTO rules and comply with their WTO commitments.

We call on all WTO members to ensure that all COVID-19 related measures are targeted, proportionate, transparent and temporary and do not create unnecessary barriers to trade or disruption to global supply chains, and are consistent with WTO rules. We urge all WTO Members to inform the WTO of all such measures in a timely manner.

We support the necessary WTO reform, with a view to enhance its' resilience, authority and efficacy. The reform must, inter alia, preserve the centrality, core values and fundamental principles of the WTO, and consider the interests of all members, including developing countries and LDC, recognizing that the majority of WTO members are developing countries.

We emphasize the primary importance of ensuring the restoration and preservation of the normal functioning of a two-stage binding WTO Dispute Settlement system, including

appointment of Appellate Body members. We underscore the need for expeditious restoration of the full strength Appellate Body.

We support the importance of transparency at the WTO, taking into account the current trade realities. We underscore the importance of timely notifications as required by various WTO agreements. We emphasize the importance of early announcement of trade-related regulatory changes with a view of promoting predictability in international trade for economic operators. We also underline the importance of improving functioning of the WTO and its' subsidiary bodies with a view of ensuring transparency and effective participation of all Members in the WTO meetings and in the decision-making process.

We reaffirm the central role of the WTO in regulating multilateral trade. We note the importance of Doha Round agenda. We underscore the significance of the ongoing WTO negotiations, including on fishery subsidies. In view of the postponement of the Twelfth WTO Ministerial Conference, we urge all WTO members continue to work with a view to advance these negotiations, and ensure timely conclusion of these negotiations. We also stress the need for the negotiations to be inclusive, transparent and enable full participation of Members, taking into account the challenges presented by COVID-19.

We express our common intention to engage in a frank and result-oriented discussion with the other WTO Members with a view to fully restore and improve the functioning of the WTO in the interest of all its Members and enable it to adapt to evolving economic conditions, respond to Members' concerns and play a bigger role in global economic governance.

We also underline the crucial importance of promptly appointing a new WTO Director General in a transparent and inclusive manner, which will contribute to the soonest and fullest restoration of the WTO functions.