

**General Council Meeting  
23 – 24 February 2022**

**Statement by India – Delivered by Ambassador & PR to the WTO**

**Agenda Item 6: WTO RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC – REPORT BY THE CHAIR**

Thank you Chair, for giving me the floor again.

2. Let me start by thanking you for your report on the 'strategic pause'. We have not called or asked for this strategic pause; but I hope that this pause has helped in taking the process forward. We also like to thank the Chair for continuing to facilitate an inclusive and transparent process. The transparency meeting of February 17th was a useful opportunity for members to be apprised of how the thinking is continuing to evolve on this issue.

3. India has used this period to engage in fruitful discussions with several members. We are following this process closely, and will continue to engage in constructive discussions with members. We reiterate that the views of all members should be considered and respected. This period of 'strategic pause' should allow opportunity to reach a convergence, which will reflect the views of the entire membership.

4. Chair, our position remains that the current text JOB/GC/281 does not reflect the positions which so many members have painstakingly and repeatedly raised. The revised text has included the positions which was not reflected in 281. This can be the basis on which members can work to narrow their divergences.

5. The pandemic continues to have devastating and disruptive effects around the world. Even after repeated rounds of discussions, we are still unable to reach agreement on how to face the challenges that the pandemic has thrown up. Much work remains to be done to ensure that the systems and response mechanisms are in place for future pandemics and natural disasters.

6. We must be mindful that the credibility of this institution depends on reaching a balanced, comprehensive and meaningful consensus. We must redouble our efforts to find a response that will address all these facets.

Thank you, Chair.

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