

**General Council Meeting
October 13, 2020**

**

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

Agenda Item 2: ‘Implementation of the Bali, Nairobi and Buenos Aires Outcomes – Statement by the Chairman’

General intervention on PSH

Good Morning colleagues. Thank you Chair. Thank you for your statement on this agenda item.

2. As the WTO Membership works over-time to fulfil the mandate of MC11 and SDG 14.6 regarding disciplines on fisheries subsidies, we would like to remind them about the clear Ministerial mandates from Bali and Nairobi regarding an effective, permanent outcome on Public Stock Holding for food security purposes. This outcome is also imperative for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals number 1 and 2, and for telling the world that the WTO can still deliver results especially in areas of immediate concern to the large majority of its Membership.

3. The COVID-19 crisis is posing significant challenges to the already strained food, nutrition and livelihood security of poor and vulnerable farmers, in several developing countries and LDCs. In view of this, India takes this opportunity to emphasize the critical importance of engaging on the ministerial mandate from Bali and Nairobi to have an effective and permanent outcome on the issue of Public Stockholding for food security purposes by MC12.

Responding to the issues raised by EU:

4. As a responsible Member of the WTO, India has been consistently complying with its notification obligations at the WTO, including with the notification obligations prescribed in the document G/AG/2. Our track-record with meeting our transparency obligations has been much better than that of several Members who are pressing for enhanced transparency at the WTO.

5. Pursuant to the Bali Ministerial Decision on Public Stockholding for Food Security Purposes and the General Council Decision of 2014 as contained in document WT/L/939, India notified the Committee on Agriculture that it has, for the first time, exceeded the de minimis level of market price support for rice for the marketing year 2018-2019, by a very minor margin of 1.4%.

6. Market price support for rice, a traditional staple food crop is notified under Article 7.2(b) of the Agreement on Agriculture in pursuance of public stockholding programmes for food security purposes. India's public

stockholding programmes for food security purposes, covering rice and a number of other commodities, have been consistently reported in its Table DS: 1 notifications since 1995.

7. The programme is consistent with the criteria mentioned in paragraph 3, footnote 5, and footnote 5&6 of Annex 2 to the Agreement on Agriculture. Further, the stocks under the programme are acquired and released in order to meet the domestic food security needs of India's poor and vulnerable population, and not to impede commercial trade or food security of others. For these reasons, the notified level of market price support for rice is covered by the peace clause set out in the Bali Ministerial Decision on Public Stockholding for Food Security Purposes (WT/MIN (13)/38) and the General Council Decision (WT/L/939).

8. India has been constructively engaging on this issue with other Members in the meetings of the Committee on Agriculture.]
