

**General Council Meeting
July 27-28, 2021**

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

Agenda Item 16: Joint communication on systemic issues – Statement by Switzerland

First of all, we thank Switzerland and other co-sponsors for their submission. India is happy to note that part of the submission is borrowed from the ‘Reform Proposal’ submitted by India with other co-sponsors in December, 2020 General Council meeting and Agenda 14 discussed today in this meeting.

2. India remains fully committed to the rules-based multilateral trading system with WTO as its center piece. In that regard we hope that MC12 will be successful in delivering a fair, balanced and meaningful outcomes that will reflect the interests of developing and LDC Members of this organization. We believe, that a successful MC will go a long way in restoring the credibility of this institution and also repose everyone’s faith in the multilateral trading system.

3. Most importantly, this organization needs to show its relevance by delivering a robust response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which is perhaps one of the biggest health and socio-economic challenge of our generation. In this regard, we urge all Members to engage constructively and to work towards pragmatic, balanced and tangible outcomes at MC12. Leaving out IP related issues and movement of professionals (particularly health care workers) will make the proposal unbalanced and ineffective.

4. India greatly values the WTO and the principles and objectives set out in the Marrakesh Agreement and the centrality of the rules-based multilateral trading system. Any attempt to bring in non-mandated outcome through JSI route in MC12 will be counter-productive. Trade can play a major role in the promotion of sustainable development and the alleviation of poverty. The rules-based trading system contributes to fostering international trade and development, including through facilitating the peaceful settlement of trade disputes, and containing protectionism.

5. We join others in reaffirming the central importance of development in the WTO. The WTO needs to remain an essential tool for Members to achieve inclusive and sustainable global growth and development, including through the further integration of developing countries and LDCs into world trade.

6. Finally, we emphasize the urgent need for reforming the WTO in order to correct the historical imbalances as well as to make it effective to address the current and future challenges. In this regard, we would like to recall the WTO reform proposal submitted by India, along with other developing countries in August 2019 and again in December 2020, contained in the document WT/GC/W/778/Rev.3.

Thank you, Chair.
