

**General Council Meeting
9-10 May, 2022**

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

AGENDA ITEM 4: TWELFTH SESSION OF THE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE – STATEMENT BY THE CHAIR

Thank you Chair for your Report and recall our statement during the TNC meeting.

2. India looks forward to a successful Ministerial that will achieve concrete deliverables on the critical issues confronting the world today, that is, the current food crisis and the ongoing pandemic, as well as long pending mandated issues such as permanent solution to public stockholding. Taking note of the current circumstances in which MC 12 is being held, we should try to finalize as many deliverables as possible before the commencement of MC12, so that we do not overburden our Ministers with a negotiating agenda during the Ministerial itself.

3. We thank you for restarting the negotiations on the outcome document, and my delegation will engage constructively to achieve a consensus based Ministerial Declaration. We must close the remaining outstanding paragraphs and have the final outcome ready before the Ministerial Conference.

4. Let me reiterate what I said during the TNC meeting on Chair's summary text, that we do not favour or support it, as we still feel that we should strive and work towards a consensus-based document and we hope everyone will strive with equal sincerity to achieve a consensus based Ministerial Declaration. As we go along, we would appreciate more clarity on the nature i.e., negotiating or non-negotiating of the Ministerial, so that we can appraise our Ministers to best utilise their presence here in Geneva. Details on thematic sessions will help us in moving forward and preparing in a better manner.

A. WTO RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC – REPORT BY THE FACILITATOR

5. Thank you Chair and first of all, I would like to thank Ambassador Dacio for his tireless effort both as the former General Council Chair and now as Facilitator for this fight. I would also like to thank him for his report today. Chair, my delegation has constructively engaged with Members throughout this process to find a meaningful and balanced text. In this regard, we had submitted our text also in the document 271. The way forward depends on how we can

build on the work that has already been done. Members have already done painstaking work to ensure that we have a comprehensive and balanced document. It is important that we should not lose this work in the interests of the need to move forward. The outcome document has to be based on an equal consideration of all viewpoints on this fight.

6. Chair, our position is that the Declaration whatever the format must be balanced, comprehensive and meaningful to all of us. The focus should be on the content. A streamlining of various formulations is something which we can work towards as long as the overall text remains balanced between various viewpoints.

7. India has engaged in fruitful discussions with several Members using the time provided during the strategic pause. We are following this process closely and will continue to engage in constructive discussions with Members.

8. More work remains to be done to ensure that the systems and response mechanisms are in place for future pandemics and natural disasters.

9. We must be mindful that the credibility of this institution depends on reaching a consensus both on the IP and non-IP aspects of pandemic response before Ministerial Conference. In this regard, let me list out those four important priority items for us which is food security, economic recovery, resuming and removing constraints in trade in services including logistics aspects and telemedicine, and having a trigger ready mechanisms in both IP and non-IP related matters to take care of present as well as such future pandemics of similar nature.

10. Chair, therefore, we must redouble our efforts to find a response that will address all these facets.
