

**GENERAL COUNCIL
MEETING OF 22 FEBRUARY 2010**

The following matters were considered:

1. **Report by the Chairman of the Trade Negotiations Committee:** The General Council heard a report by the Director-General (circulated in JOB/GC/1) on the TNC's activities since he last reported to the Council in December. The report provided an update of the main activities that he had undertaken as TNC Chair, such as the Ministerial meeting in Davos, in which three main points had emerged: a commitment to the progress already made as the basis to enter the last stage of the negotiation, and that time was running short; the importance of continuing Senior Official's engagement; and, the importance of continuing to resist protectionist temptations as the world was recovering from the economic crisis. The report also gave an overview of how the stocktaking exercise, which had been agreed by Ministers at MC7, would develop. In particular, the Director-General highlighted that this exercise would take place on 29-30 March and that, as the time was not ripe yet for Ministers' involvement, it would be conducted as Senior Officials' level. He also gave an update of the activities in the various Negotiating Groups since the beginning of the year. The delegations of Egypt (on behalf of the Arab Group); Gabon (on behalf of the African Group); Zambia (on behalf of the LDC Group); Colombia; Mexico; Japan; Nepal; European Union; India; Bangladesh; Hong Kong, China; Turkey; Cuba; Switzerland; Chinese Taipei; Norway; United States and China spoke. The majority of them expressed serious concerns about the lack of progress in the negotiations and about the lack of clarity in terms of programme for the stocktaking exercise as well as its expected outcome. The importance of the development aspect of the Round was again stressed by many delegations, as well as the possibility for an early harvest in some areas, such as those of importance to LDCs.
2. **Work Programme on Small Economies:** The Chair of the Dedicated Session of the CTD, said that the proponents of SVEs had circulated a new proposal to the Negotiating Group on Rules (TN/RL/GEN/162) concerning "Additional Flexibilities for Small and Vulnerable Economies under Article III of the draft Chair's text on Fishery Subsidies", which would be included in the compilation of all proposals made so far. Barbados (on behalf of SVEs) spoke.
3. **The Financial and Economic Crisis and the Role of the WTO – Communication from Argentina and Ecuador:** Argentina reiterated the proposal contained in its joint submission with Ecuador, co-sponsored by India, (WT/GC/W/617) that the Secretariat should conduct a systematic and comprehensive analysis of the effects of fiscal and stimulus packages taken in response to the crisis and proposed, echoed by Ecuador and India, that the Chairman of the General Council should undertake consultations to define the future steps in order to establish a work plan for such analysis. The delegations of China; Turkey; United States; Brazil; Bolivia; Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela; Canada; European Union; Cuba; Dominican Republic; Japan; Mexico; Paraguay; Chile and Switzerland spoke. The majority of them expressed support for the proposal, including that the General Council Chair should start consultations and expressed interest in participating in such consultations. Some delegations highlighted that the most appropriate WTO body to discuss this issue was the TPRB, and others stated that specific measures should be analyzed in the respective Committees where they would normally be discussed. At the end of the discussion, the General Council took note of the statements made and agreed that, in line with what seemed to be the general view, the Chairman of the General Council would recommend to his successor that he should undertake consultations on the best way forward concerning this proposal, without prejudice to the position of any Member, and report back to the next General Council.
4. **Accession of Developing Countries – Communication from Gabon on behalf of the Informal Group of Developing Countries:** Following its recent appointment as coordinator of the Informal Group of Developing Countries, the Dominican Republic thanked the Director-General for the Annual Report on WTO Accessions for 2009 (WT/ACC/13) which provided a comprehensive

overview of the processes, current initiatives and state of play of individual accessions. However, the Group believed that more attention should have been given to the conclusions from MC7 on this issue, in particular the importance of accessions in broadening and strengthening the WTO and the importance of technical assistance and capacity building at all stages in the process. The Group also stressed that accessions should be based on technical and legal issues and leave political considerations aside. The representatives of Nigeria; Zambia (on behalf of the LDC Group); Pakistan; Turkey; Bangladesh; Chinese Taipei; Venezuela; Paraguay; China; Egypt (on behalf of the Arab Group); United States; Argentina; European Union; Japan and India spoke. Most delegations supported the original proposal that accessions should be more transparent and that the institutional mechanism should be improved. Also, many delegations stressed that LDC accessions should be facilitated, in line with the 2002 Decision on this issue. There was a suggestion from the floor that a template for "fast-track" accessions could be developed. However, other delegations cautioned against a "one-size-fits-all" approach, given the unique nature of each accession process and believed that the system already provided ample opportunity to exchange information.

5. **Information on EU Schedule CXL:** This item was placed on the agenda at the request of the European Union and concerns the certification of the EU's revised schedule upon its enlargement to 15 members States in 2005. The EU explained that, when the then EC proposed a new schedule CXL in 1996, reservations had been raised by several Members and that the schedule had remained non-certified since then. The Members concerned had now lifted their reservations. The four delegations concerned (Australia, New Zealand, Canada and US) confirmed that, in 1996, they had objected to the certification on the basis that the methodology for the submission of revised subsidies commitments had not been agreed. They were now ready to lift their reservations on the schedule, but without prejudice to their positions that the methodology used should not create a precedent for schedules reflecting subsequent enlargements of the EU. Argentina and Switzerland also spoke.

6. **Appointment of Officers to WTO Bodies:** In line with the Guidelines for Appointment of Officers (WT/L/510), the General Council took note of the consensus on the slate of names for chairpersons of WTO bodies in Groups 1, 2, 4 and 5 of the Annex to the Guidelines. The Council also agreed to renew the appointments of the chairpersons of bodies under the TNC, with the exception of the new appointment for the TRIPS Special Session (Amb. Mwape, Zambia).¹

7. **Election of Chairperson:** The General Council elected by acclamation Amb. Gero (Canada) as Chair for 2010.

The Council considered the following matters under "Other Business":

8. **Chairmanship of the Working Party on the Accession of Belarus:** The General Council agreed that Ambassador Bozkurt Aran (Turkey) would serve as Chairperson of this Working Party, replacing Amb. Mia Horn af Rantzien (Sweden), who had resigned as Chairperson.

9. **Administrative Measures for Members in arrears:** On behalf of the Chair of the Budget Committee, Mr. Östberg (Sweden) informed the Council of the Members that were under Administrative Measures in Categories II - IV. He also noted that, during MC7, the Director-General had held consultations with several Members in arrears and that a full report of these actions would be made at the next meeting of the General Council. The General Council Chair requested Members in Categories III and IV to inform his successor, before the next meeting of the Council, as to when their payment of arrears might be expected.

The next meeting of the General Council is scheduled for 4-5 May 2010.

¹ See attached press release.

PRESS RELEASE

PRESS/597
22 February 2010

(10-0000)

GENERAL COUNCIL WTO chairpersons for 2010

The WTO General Council today (22 February) noted the consensus on the following slate of names of chairpersons for WTO Bodies:

General Council	H.E. Mr. John GERO (Canada)
Dispute Settlement Body	H.E. Mr. Yonov Frederick AGAH (Nigeria)
Trade Policy Review Body	H.E. Mr. Bozkurt ARAN (Turkey)
Council for Trade in Goods	H.E. Dr. Anthony Mothae MARUPING (Lesotho)
Council for Trade in Services	H.E. Mrs. Elin Østebø JOHANSEN (Norway)
Council for TRIPS	Mr. Martin GLASS (Hong Kong, China)
Committee on Trade and Development	H.E. Mr. ERWIDODO (Indonesia)
Committee on Balance-of-Payments Restrictions	Mr. Raimondas ALIŠAUSKAS (Lithuania)
Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration	Mr. Pasi-Heikki VAARANMAA (Finland)
Committee on Trade and Environment	H.E. Mr. Eduardo MUÑOZ GÓMEZ (Colombia)
Committee on Regional Trade Agreements	H.E. Mr. Alfredo SUESCUM (Panama)
Working Group on Trade, Debt and Finance	H.E. Mr. Federico A. GONZÁLEZ (Paraguay)
Working Group on Trade and Transfer of Technology	H.E. Mr. Hisham M. BADR (Egypt)

The General Council also agreed to renew the appointments of the current chairs of the bodies under the Trade Negotiations Committee, and filled the vacancy in the Special Session of the Council for TRIPS by appointing H.E. Mr. Darlington MWAPE (Zambia) as chair.

These chairpersons are to serve until the next Session of the Ministerial Conference, except for the chairperson of the Negotiating Group on Rules, who has informed the General Council chair that he

would shortly be recalled to capital. The new chair of the General Council is expected to undertake consultations on finding a new chair for the Rules Group.

Special Session of the Committee on Agriculture	H.E. Dr. David WALKER (New Zealand)
Special Session of the Council for Trade in Services	H.E. Mr. Fernando DE MATEO Y VENTURINI (Mexico)
Negotiating Group on Market Access	H.E. Mr. Luzius WASESCHA (Switzerland)
Special Session of the Council for TRIPS	H.E. Mr. Darlington MWAPE (Zambia)
Negotiating Group on Rules	H.E. Mr. Guillermo VALLES GALMÉS (Uruguay)
Special Session of the Dispute Settlement Body	H.E. Mr. Ronald SABORÍO SOTO (Costa Rica)
Special Session of the Committee on Trade and Environment	H.E. Mr. Manuel A.J. TEEHANKEE (Philippines)
Special Session of the Committee on Trade and Development	H.E. Mr. Thawatchai SOPHASTIENPHONG (Thailand)
Negotiating Group on Trade Facilitation	H.E. Mr. Eduardo Ernesto SPERISEN-YURT (Guatemala)

END
