The Twelfth Meeting of the BRICS Trade Ministers

9 June 2022

JOINT COMMUNIQUE

We, the BRICS Trade Ministers, met virtually on June 9, 2022, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Wang Wentao, the Minister of Commerce of the People’s Republic of China. We reviewed the progress made in BRICS economic and trade cooperation, exchanged views on cooperation in key areas of Digital Economy, Trade and Investment for Sustainable Development, Supply Chains Cooperation and Supporting Multilateral Trading System, and reached broad consensus on the ways to further enhance BRICS cooperation.

Global Economic Situation

At present, the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic remains uncertain, and the global economic recovery is still fragile and weak. The growth rate of global trade in goods has slowed down, while the recovery of trade in services is still under great pressure. Overall, economic recovery is diverging across economies and regions, with developing and least developed economies facing multiple challenges such as availability of vaccines.

We recognize the dynamism of the digital economy in mitigating the impact of COVID-19 and enabling global economic recovery. We also recognize the positive role that trade and investment can play in promoting sustainable
development, national and regional industrialization, the transition towards sustainable consumption and production patterns. We observe that the pandemic has introduced new bottlenecks in regional and global supply chains, and the disruption of supply chains has adversely impacted many sectors and firms, including MSMEs.

We recognize that since the establishment of the mechanism of Trade Ministers Meeting in 2011, with the efforts of all members, the BRICS economic and trade cooperation has been steadily improved. We agree to further strengthen trade and investment cooperation, harness the potential and address the challenges of the digital economy, improve the resilience and stability of global and regional supply chains, support our efforts to address global challenges, and safeguard the interests of BRICS countries. We expect our efforts will create impetus for sustainable economic recovery.

Support the Multilateral Trading System and the WTO reform

BRICS countries support the multilateral trading system as embodied in the WTO. We will engage constructively to pursue the necessary WTO reform to build an open world economy that supports trade and development, preserve the pre-eminent role of the WTO for setting global trade rules and governance, supporting inclusive development and promoting the rights and interests of its members, including developing members and LDCs. We recognize that special and differential treatment as established in WTO rules is a tool to facilitate the achievement of WTO objectives with respect to economic growth and
We call upon all WTO members to avoid unilateral and protectionist measures that run counter to the spirit and rules of the WTO. We will work closely with other WTO members towards a successful 12th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC12). To this end, we endorse **BRICS Statement on Strengthening the Multilateral Trading System and Reforming the WTO.**

**Unleash the potential of the digital economy**

We reaffirm the guidance on strengthening BRICS cooperation on digital economy outlined in *the Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership 2025* and *the BRICS Implementation Roadmap on Trade and Investment related aspects of the “Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership 2025”*. We recognize the pivotal role of the digital economy for the modernization and transformation of the industry, promotion of inclusive economic growth, facilitation of decision-making process and stimulation of the national economies to meet the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals.

We recognize the challenges facing trade and investment development in the digital era and acknowledge that BRICS members are at different levels of digital development, and thus recognize the need to address respective challenges including the digital divide. We reiterate that all members should, on the basis of mutual respect, strengthen communication, deepen dialogue and cooperation, to better promote trade facilitation, create a conducive environment to enhance consumer protection and strengthen the cooperation on MSMEs.
Recalling the sound basis for cooperation among BRICS countries on the digital economy and e-commerce, emphasizing the commonalities and complementarities of BRICS members in the digital economy, and considering that a forward-looking, inclusive and open BRICS digital economy partnership framework is conducive to creating more development opportunities, we endorse the **BRICS Digital Economy Partnership Framework**. We recognize the importance of cooperation on digital industrialization. In order to better coordinate implementation efforts, we welcome the establishment of the Digital Economy Working Group by upgrading the E-commerce Working Group. The Digital Economy Working Group will coordinate and interact with the Working Group on ICT Cooperation, as well as the workstreams established within this track, namely the Digital BRICS Task Force (DBTF) and the BRICS Institute of Future Networks (BIFN) as practicable to avoid any duplication for advancing the BRICS digital economy in accordance with respective advantages, and within respective domestic legal frameworks. We appreciate this year’s support provided by UNCTAD and ITC and their presentations on BRICS Digital Economy.

**Promote trade and investment for sustainable development**

We note with concern that the COVID-19 pandemic has negatively affected economic development and the progress of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We recall the Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership 2025 in which BRICS members agreed to enhance cooperation on climate change to ensure full and effective implementation of UNFCCC
and its Paris Agreement. It is our priority to address the three dimensions of sustainable development, the economic, social and environmental, in an integrated and indivisible manner. We recognize that trade and investment can play an important role in promoting sustainable development, and endeavor to explore the opportunities for promoting industrial development as we address the challenge of climate change.

We endorse the BRICS Initiative on Trade and Investment for Sustainable Development, stressing that the BRICS countries will strengthen cooperation in the area of trade and investment to safeguard their interests. Stressing that the measures taken to protect the environment should not be discriminatory or used as a means of justification for hindering trade and investment, we will work together to meet the environmental challenges and promote a sustainable, resilient and inclusive post-pandemic recovery. We take note of the presentation by UNCTAD on trade and environmental sustainability, and by UNIDO on promoting sustainability and climate action through trade and industrial policies, and take note that UNCTAD has been assigned by Chinese Presidency to prepare a report on BRICS investment.

Enhance cooperation on supply chains

We recognize that the travel and logistics restrictions related to the pandemic, coupled with WTO inconsistent unilateral and protectionist measures, have severely impacted supply chains both at regional and global levels. Developing countries as well as their MSMEs are among the most vulnerable to supply chain shocks.
Recognizing the need to enhance cooperation on supply chains, we endorse the BRICS Initiative on Enhancing Cooperation on Supply Chains, reaffirming that openness, efficiency, stability, transparency, reliability and resilience of the global, regional and national production and supply chains are crucial in combating the COVID-19 pandemic, tackling economic recovery challenges and boosting international trade and investment. We are committed to strengthening dialogue, exchanges and cooperation in areas such as trade facilitation, investment, trade in services, and MSMEs to address supply chain disruptions.

Recognizing that trade in services is a key engine for the post-pandemic recovery of international trade, as well as an important path for countries to move up the supply chains, we agree to strengthen engagement of BRICS national focal points with BRICS Business Council, with the aim to promote implementation of BRICS Trade in Services Cooperation Roadmap and relevant documents including the BRICS Framework for cooperation in Professional Services. We take note of the proposal of the Presidency to establish the BRICS Trade in Services Network (BTSN) and will continue discussions. We encourage cooperation among BRICS countries to enhance the interconnectivity of supply chains and promote trade and investment flows. We take note of presentation made by ITC on trade in services.

Other Issues

We thank the WTO, UNCTAD, UNIDO and ITC for their presentations. On the basis of BRICS consultation, the rotating
Presidency will continue to draw on their expert advice in contribution to BRICS future cooperation.

We take note of China’s hosting the "Buy BRICS" online promotion event, and welcome the upcoming "Dialogue on Digital Economy Development of BRICS" "Forum on Sustainable Investment of BRICS" "Forum on Trade in Services of BRICS" "Online training programmes on e-commerce", which are designed to provide effective platforms for promoting the digital economy and sustainable development of the BRICS countries.

We appreciate the work done by the BRICS Business Council (BBC) to promote cooperation among the BRICS business communities.

We appreciate the contribution of the BRICS Women Business Alliance (WBA) in promoting women's participation in business activities in BRICS countries and in creating economic opportunities for women entrepreneurs.

We will strengthen dialogue among BRICS countries and jointly create more development opportunities for emerging markets and developing countries.
Annex

I. **BRICS Statement on Strengthening the Multilateral Trading System and Reforming the WTO**

II. **BRICS Digital Economy Partnership Framework**

III. **BRICS Initiative on Trade and Investment for Sustainable Development**

IV. **BRICS Initiative on Enhancing Cooperation on Supply Chains**