

27 March 2020

Ministerial statement

“Further to the Davos statement of 24 January 2020, we, the Ministers of Australia; Brazil; Canada; China; Chile; Colombia; Costa Rica; European Union; Guatemala; Hong Kong, China; Mexico; New Zealand; Norway; Singapore; Switzerland; and Uruguay, have decided [¹] to put in place a Multi-party Interim Appeal Arbitration Arrangement (MPIA) on the basis of the attached document. This arrangement ensures, pursuant to Article 25 of the WTO Dispute Settlement Understanding, that any disputes among us will continue benefitting from a functioning dispute settlement system at the WTO, including the availability of an independent and impartial appeal stage.

We believe that such WTO dispute settlement system is of the utmost importance for a rules-based trading system. The arrangement is open to any WTO Member, and we welcome any WTO Member to join.

We wish to underscore the interim nature of this arrangement. We remain firmly and actively committed to resolving the impasse of the Appellate Body appointments as a matter of priority and urgency, including through necessary reforms. The arrangement therefore will remain in effect only until the Appellate Body is again fully functional.

We intend for the arrangement to be officially communicated to the WTO in the coming weeks. “

¹ Subject to the completion of respective domestic procedures, where applicable