



## SUMMARY OF THE OTTAWA GROUP MINISTERIAL MEETING, PARIS, 23 MAY 2019

### SUMMARY FROM CANADA

The following summary, dated 24 May 2019, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of Canada.

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This morning, Ministers and Heads of Delegation from the Ottawa Group met to continue our discussions on the state of play at the World Trade Organization, including efforts to strengthen and enhance the organization. With work underway on multiple fronts, today's meeting was an important check-in and exchange of views on outcomes achieved to date.

WTO Director-General Roberto Azevêdo underlined the need for concerted action and engagement by all WTO Members in order to address the challenges facing the organization. Inaction is not an option: the WTO must reform in order to remain credible and relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Good progress has been made in enhancing the day-to-day functions of the organization. Work continues apace on developing concrete proposals to be brought forward for consideration by the wider membership. Officials should continue to work quickly and diligently and begin similar initiatives in other WTO bodies in the coming months.

Recognizing its importance to the future functioning of the organization, we discussed how best to pursue the development dimension in the context of WTO rule-making. Ministers appreciate Norway's leadership, including its discussion paper, which lays out the context on development concerns and serves as a useful basis for continued dialogue at the WTO. We agreed that further outreach to the broader membership is required. In addition, Ministers were grateful for Brazil's impressions of the recent ministerial meeting for developing countries hosted by India.

The Ottawa Group discussed ongoing work including on the Joint Statement Initiatives, in particular e-commerce, transparency and notification obligations, and industrial subsidies. We welcomed Chile's update on the recent successful APEC Trade Ministers meeting. We further discussed Japan's plans for considerations on WTO reform under its G20 presidency.

The Ottawa Group encourages all WTO Members to constructively engage in negotiations to achieve a comprehensive and effective agreement on fisheries subsidies in 2019. We reiterate the need for collective action to safeguard and strengthen the WTO dispute-settlement mechanism and to resolve the current impasse in appointments to the WTO Appellate Body. To further reinvigorate the negotiating function, we urge all Members to work towards addressing pending and unfinished business, including market distortions caused by subsidies and other instruments.

The group continues to welcome opportunities to engage with the broader WTO membership on pragmatic proposals to advance WTO reform.

We have directed officials to intensify their work on all aspects of WTO reform and we look forward to reviewing progress when we meet again in late 2019.

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