

27 February 2020

Workshop on the Moratorium on Customs Duties on Electronic Transmissions

On 10 December 2019, Members adopted a decision on the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce (WT/L/1079). In that decision they agreed to reinvigorate the Work Programme and to renew the practice of not imposing customs duties on electronic transmissions until MC12. They also agreed to have structured discussions on all trade-related topics of interest brought forward by Members, including on scope, definition and impact of the moratorium on customs duties on electronic transmissions.

To better inform Members' discussion ahead of MC12, the WTO Secretariat is organizing a workshop that will look at different aspects of the moratorium. The workshop will bring together various stakeholders including Members, international organizations, research institutions and business representatives. The participation of capital-based officials is encouraged.

Date of workshop: 23 March 2020

Venue: WTO headquarters, Geneva – CR

Organizer: WTO Secretariat



WTO OMC

DRAFT Programme¹

I. 10:00 – 10:15 Opening Remarks

II. 10:20 – 10:50 Introduction

What is a customs duty and what is a domestic tax? How can each be viewed in the context of the moratorium on e-commerce?

III. 10:50 – 12:10 Members' perspectives on what is covered by the moratorium

What are the different perspectives and understanding about the moratorium and its scope? What aspects need more clarity?

IV. 12:10 – 13:00 Levies on electronic transmissions, technical challenges and alternative approaches

What are the technical aspects to be considered regarding customs duties on electronic transmissions? What is the experience of countries imposing a domestic tax on electronic transmissions?

13:00-15:00 Lunch break

V. 15:00 – 16:30 Quantifying the impact of the moratorium

What efforts have been made to quantify cross-border trade in digitizable goods? What methods are available for quantifying the effects of the moratorium? What have been the results?

VI. 16.30 – 17:45 Economic development and the moratorium

What are the effects of the moratorium on business and economic development?

VII. 17:45 – 18:00 Conclusions and way forward

¹ A full list of speakers will be communicated at a later date.