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**General Council
28 February and 1 March 2019**

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DRAFT GENERAL COUNCIL DECISION

PROCEDURES TO STRENGTHEN THE NEGOTIATING FUNCTION OF THE WTO

Decision of X Date

The following communication, dated 15 February 2019, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of the United States.

The General Council,

Acknowledging that full implementation of WTO rules as negotiated by Members can contribute to economic growth and development and the need to take steps to facilitate full implementation;

Recognizing the great strides made by several WTO Members since the establishment of the WTO in accomplishing the goals set out in the *Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization*, of "raising standards of living, ensuring full employment and a large and steadily growing volume of real income and effective demand, and expanding the production of and trade in goods and services, while allowing for the optimal use of the world's resources in accordance with the objective of sustainable development...;"

Recognizing that not all WTO Members have enjoyed equal rates of economic growth and development since the establishment of the WTO;

Recognizing the plight of the least-developed countries and the need to ensure their effective participation in the world trading system, and to take further measures to improve their trading opportunities;

Recognizing that reserving flexibilities for those WTO Members with the greatest difficulty integrating into the multilateral trading system can open new export opportunities for such countries; and

Desiring to strengthen the negotiating function of the WTO to produce high-standard, reciprocal and mutually advantageous arrangements directed to the substantial reduction of tariffs and other barriers to trade and to the elimination of discriminatory treatment in international trade relations;

Agrees as follows:

To facilitate the full implementation of future WTO agreements and to ensure that the maximum benefits of trade accrue to those Members with the greatest difficulty integrating into the multilateral trading system, the following categories of Members will not avail themselves of special and differential treatment in current and future WTO negotiations:

- i. A WTO Member that is a Member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), or a WTO Member that has begun the accession process to the OECD;
- ii. A WTO Member that is a member of the Group of 20 (G20);

- iii. A WTO Member that is classified as a "high income" country by the World Bank; or
- iv. A WTO Member that accounts for no less than 0.5 per cent of global merchandise trade (imports and exports).

Nothing in this Decision precludes reaching agreement that in sector-specific negotiations other Members are also ineligible for special and differential treatment.
