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**Ministerial Conference
Thirteenth Session
Abu Dhabi, 26-29 February 2024**

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**MINISTERIAL DECLARATION ADOPTED AT THE THIRD
MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE g7+ GROUP**

ABU DHABI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, 26-29 FEBRUARY 2024

The following communication, dated 29 February 2024, is being circulated at the request of the Ministers responsible for Trade and the Heads of Delegations of Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Liberia, Papua New Guinea, São Tomé and Príncipe, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Solomon Islands, South Sudan, Sudan, Timor-Leste, Togo and Yemen.

We, the Ministers responsible for trade of the g7+ Group (formerly referred to as the g7+ WTO Accessions Group) have met on 26 February 2024 on the margins of the 13th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC13), for the third Ministerial meeting of the Group.

Recalling that the Ministers of the g7+ WTO Accessions Group met on 10 December 2017 and on 12 June 2022, during the 11th and the 12th WTO Ministerial Conferences and issued Declarations contained in documents [WT/MIN\(17\)/51](#) and [WT/MIN\(22\)/23](#), respectively;

Announcing the expansion of the Group to the whole of the g7+ association and *welcoming* the participation and support of other Members and Observers at this Third meeting;

Expressing our collective appreciation to Afghanistan for the coordination of the Group in 2018-2020, and to Liberia and Timor-Leste since 2021;

Welcoming the accessions of Comoros and Timor-Leste to the WTO which send a strong signal to other ongoing accessions, closing the 8-year gap since the WTO welcomed two other g7+ members – Afghanistan and Liberia – in 2016;

Recalling that fragile and conflict-affected states (FCS) remain heavily constrained by institutional fragility and/or violent conflict and therefore face serious trade-related challenges, making them disproportionately vulnerable to the continuing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the global economic downturn;

Deeply concerned that, despite two new accessions, many FCS continue to face difficulties in advancing accession negotiations or implementing WTO commitments, unable to fully benefit from the multilateral trading system, which expose them to re-occurring risks of increased fragility and conflict escalation;

Re-iterating the Group's strong belief in the multilateral trading system which should be more inclusive, equitable and relevant to the realities of the present; and,

Welcoming the advancement of the Trade for Peace Programme by the WTO Secretariat, in response to the specific needs expressed by FCS;

1. We call on the WTO to play an active role in promoting peace and stability, including through the Trade for Peace Programme by the WTO Secretariat which is aimed at enhancing partnerships between the trade, peace and humanitarian communities. We strongly believe in the trade-peace nexus and in the integration and effective participation of FCS in the multilateral trading system, which could help them achieve stability, resilience and durable peace necessary for sustainable development.
2. We re-affirm the key role of the g7+ Group as a platform for: (i) facilitating the integration of FCS in the WTO, including through WTO accessions, (ii) leading the development of the WTO Trade for Peace Programme for all FCS, (iii) facilitating sharing of lessons on the promotion of trade; and (iv) advocating for inclusive and effective multilateral trade policies.
3. We continue to call for the establishment of an action-oriented Work Programme on Trade for Peace for FCS, as proposed in [WT/GC/W/830](#). The Work Programme shall aim at enhancing the understanding on the trade-peace nexus, in particular, how trade could help promote and sustain peace in FCS. The Group commits to engage in consultations with Members in the Committee on Trade and Development, so that a multilateral decision on the Work Programme could be taken by all Members at the 14th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC14) in Cameroon.
4. We urge WTO Members to sustain the engagement with and provide necessary support to all FCS acceding governments towards expeditious conclusion of their accessions, on terms designed to contribute to their economic development, peace and stability, and taking account of the 2002 and 2012 LDC Accession Guidelines.¹
5. We also welcome the active participation of FCS Members in the work of the WTO, despite the specific constraints faced by them. We urge WTO Members to provide targeted support, which is sensitive to their situations.
6. We remain committed to continue coordinating our efforts to support WTO accessions and maximize the benefits of WTO membership for FCS. We will convene regularly to promote the collective objectives mentioned above. We look forward to engaging with the WTO Membership and development partners to advance these goals.

¹ [WT/L/508](#) and [WT/L/508/Add.1](#).