



**Ministerial Conference  
Fourteenth Session  
Yaoundé, 26-30 March 2026**

## FOURTEENTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

### MC14 CHAIRPERSON'S SUMMARY

1.1. Let me begin with my **summary, under my own responsibility as MC14 Chairperson**, of the main points which have emerged from the discussions during this Conference. The summary is not exhaustive, but I hope it captures our discussions over the past four days.

1.2. We started the Conference on a high note as we celebrated the Entry into Force of the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies and welcomed three new deposits of instruments of acceptance from Paraguay, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Samoa. Let me also congratulate Members for adopting the three decisions: the Ministerial Decision on the Work Programme on Small Economies<sup>1</sup>, the Ministerial Decision on Enhancing the Precise, Effective and Operational Implementation of Special and Differential Treatment Provisions of the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) and the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT)<sup>2</sup>, and the Ministerial Decision on Fisheries Subsidies.<sup>3</sup>

1.3. On the **Electronic Commerce Work Programme and Moratorium**, we have the draft text of the Facilitator – Honourable Senator Kamina Johnson Smith – which has been circulated and is annexed to this statement. As you know, this moratorium is set to expire at this Ministerial Conference or by 31 March 2026, whichever is earlier. Ministers worked tirelessly with the assistance of the Facilitator to extend the moratorium and work programme and came very close to achieving an agreement. Unfortunately, we ran out of time. I have detected a strong desire by Members to work towards this objective. As MC14 Chairperson, I am recommending that the good progress and momentum that was generated at this Conference be continued in Geneva with a view to arriving at a decision by the next General Council meeting.

1.4. Ministers also actively engaged in the **WTO Reform** Breakout Sessions on Foundational Issues of the WTO including its principles, Decision-making, Past Mandates, Development and Level Playing Field Issues. Our reform deliberations also reflected a new way of working. We are evolving on how we engage with one another. Not only was the format of the sessions "reform in and of itself" – but Ministers were true to the Reform Ministerial that this Conference was dubbed. The breakout sessions encouraged open, genuine dialogue, and the sense of urgency around reform was unmistakable throughout our discussions.

1.5. As a result of our efforts, a **revised Declaration and Work Plan on WTO Reform** emerged which was circulated and is annexed to this statement. At this pivotal moment for the multilateral trading system, this is historic. Ministers affirmed a shared purpose and provided clear timebound direction towards meaningful and necessary reform. We affirmed the need for WTO Reform. Given the importance of this matter, as MC14 Chairperson, I recommend that Members continue their work on WTO Reform work with a sense of purpose and urgency with a view to adopting the draft declaration and work plan by the General Council meeting in May 2026. Advancing substantive, comprehensive, and strategic WTO reform that can strengthen credibility and effectiveness, deliver tangible results, and keep the WTO resilient and responsive to the needs of people across the globe.

<sup>1</sup> [WT/MIN\(26\)/36](#) – [WT/L/1235](#).

<sup>2</sup> [WT/MIN\(26\)/37](#) – [WT/L/1236](#).

<sup>3</sup> [WT/MIN\(26\)/38](#) – [WT/L/1237](#).

1.6. Ministers heard an update from the DSB Chairperson on **Dispute Settlement Reform**. The DSB Chairperson's update reflected dispute settlement reform as a priority and recognized that advancing this work after the Conference – when conditions are ripe and all are ready to engage.

1.7. There was also a rich discussion on the **Moratorium on TRIPS Non-Violation and Situation Complaints**<sup>4</sup> – which also expires at this Conference – and **the LDC Specific Package**<sup>5</sup>, **the G-90 Agreement-Specific Proposals on Article 66.2 of the TRIPS Agreement**<sup>6</sup>, **transfer of technology**<sup>7</sup>, **cost of remittances**<sup>8</sup>, and **emerging agricultural trade issues**.<sup>9</sup> I would encourage Members to continue these discussions after this Conference with a view to addressing these important issues.

1.8. Let me commend Ministers for adopting the Ministerial Decision on Fisheries Subsidies. **Agriculture and fisheries subsidies** remain critically important priority areas for all Members – as a backbone of many economies and essential to food security, livelihoods, jobs, poverty reduction and sustainability. Notwithstanding the divergences in Members' positions, I was encouraged by Ministers' firm resolve to redouble efforts to bridge gaps and resume the negotiations taking into account the work undertaken thus far by Members, including during this Ministerial Conference.

1.9. The promise of the **Investment Facilitation for Development Agreement (IFDA)** to assist its signatories attract the foreign direct investment to drive growth, productivity gains, job creation, and integration into global supply chains was underscored by many Ministers. While incorporation of the IFDA has yet to transpire, MC14 provided the platform for Ministers to move this objective closer to fulfilment.

1.10. Apart from the MC14 Sessions, we also launched a new chapter of solidarity and impact with the **Enhanced Integrated Framework Phase Three**. This is a six-year renewal of our shared promise to help least-developed countries turn trade and investment into inclusive, resilient and sustainable development. Backed by fresh contributions from Germany, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, this is a tangible vote of confidence in multilateral cooperation and a clear signal that we intend to leave no LDC behind as we translate opportunity into outcomes on the ground.

1.11. As part of a new way of working, 66 WTO Members – representing around 70% of global trade – have agreed on a pragmatic pathway to bring the **Agreement on Electronic Commerce** into effect through interim arrangements while work continues toward full incorporation into the WTO legal framework. This is about certainty for businesses and consumers, about trust in the multilateral system, and about ensuring that the benefits of the digital marketplace are accessible, predictable and inclusive for all.

1.12. We launched a new phase under the **Partenariat pour le Coton (PPC) initiative**, with a focus on mobilizing investment to accelerate the transformation of the cotton-to-textile-and-garment value chain. The African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank) and other partners told the assembled Ministers that African cotton will be an engine of growth, with the bank providing the investment power. And we are happy that the President of the Afreximbank graced the occasion and also delivered an electrifying speech at the Opening Session of the Ministerial Conference.

1.13. There was a high-level event on **women and trade** featuring the work of the Women Exporters in the Digital Economy (WEIDE) Fund, the WTO informal working groups on trade and gender and on small enterprises, and the International Trade Centre's She Trades Initiative.

1.14. And we **brought continents closer together**. A high-level dialogue strengthened the bridge between Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America, affirming the power of diversified South–South trade to unlock new engines of growth, and setting in motion plans for regular summits linking

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<sup>4</sup> [WT/MIN\(26\)/W/10](#) and [WT/MIN\(26\)/W/24](#) – [IP/C/W/733](#).

<sup>5</sup> [WT/MIN\(26\)/W/7](#) and [WT/MIN\(26\)/W/20](#).

<sup>6</sup> [WT/MIN\(26\)/W/21](#).

<sup>7</sup> [WT/MIN\(26\)/W/2](#) – [WT/WGTTT/W/42/Rev.1](#) – [WT/COMTD/W/305/Rev.1](#) – [IP/C/W/729/Rev.1](#).

<sup>8</sup> [WT/MIN\(26\)/W/3/Rev.1](#).

<sup>9</sup> [WT/MIN\(26\)/W/6/Rev.3](#).

Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean – an enduring platform to deepen cooperation, expand opportunities and turn dialogue into durable partnerships.

1.15. Honourable Ministers, it has been a pleasure to host you in Yaoundé for the Fourteenth Session of the WTO Ministerial Conference.

1.16. Cameroon has been proud to have welcomed you to the second Ministerial Conference in Africa. As our continent continues to deepen its engagement in international trade, we are committed to working for a future that can deliver for our citizens and businesses, along with those of all WTO Members.

1.17. Your presence here, in the midst of circumstances that could have easily disrupted travel plans, speaks volumes about your commitment to the work of this organization. Against all odds, you made every effort to be here, and that dedication does not go unnoticed. What we have accomplished to reach this point is remarkable – and I sincerely thank you for it. Nearly 80 Ministers, representing all continents, joined this Ministerial – from the United States to Samoa, from Brazil to New Zealand, along with many Members from the Gulf, all arriving despite the challenges. I see this as a powerful reaffirmation of your confidence in the trading system and in the WTO.

1.18. Together, we demonstrated unity in setting a clear and forward-looking direction for the reform of this organization. The skill, the intensity, and the energy in the room were absolutely electric. While arriving at agreement on several priority issues will require further work, we depart with clearer pathways, renewed trust, and practical avenues of cooperation across multiple areas – evidence that the WTO is very much alive and capable of improving lives and livelihoods of all our citizens.

1.19. Excellencies, against a backdrop of geopolitical tensions, cascading crises, and a turbulent global trade landscape, your presence in Yaoundé fills my heart with hope. Let us carry the sense of solidarity, same urgency and resolve you have all shown in Yaoundé back to Geneva and into our capitals, turning momentum into decisions that make the WTO more effective, resilient, responsive, and focused on delivering for people. If we sustain this spirit of Cameroon marked by collective problem-solving, the WTO will remain the forum where differences are bridged, opportunities are unlocked, and a more prosperous, inclusive future is made real.

1.20. This concludes my Summary as Chairperson of the 14<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference.

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**ANNEX**

**WORK PROGRAMME ON ELECTRONIC COMMERCE**

**DRAFT MINISTERIAL DECISION**

The *Ministerial Conference* decides as follows:

1. We agree to continue to re-invigorate the work under the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce, based on the mandate as set out in [WT/L/274](#), and with a particular focus on its development dimension, taking into account the economic, financial and development needs of developing and least-developed Members.
  2. Building on the work undertaken under the Work Programme, we will continue to identify ways to address the digital divide for developing and least developed Members. In this regard, Members are encouraged to support developing and least-developed Members to effectively participate and tap into growth opportunities in digital trade and the digital economy, including through targeted technical assistance aimed at supporting their efforts to integrate into digital trade.
  3. We agree to improve the training and technical assistance provided under the WTO Technical Assistance and Training Plan to assist developing Members, including LDCs, to overcome the challenges they face in matters related to digital trade and we call on Members to increase their contributions to the Global Trust Fund which will be used to deliver targeted technical assistance for that purpose.
  4. We agree to continue collaboration with other intergovernmental organizations to enhance coordination to address trade-related opportunities and the challenges related to e-commerce, such as digital infrastructure and emerging technologies. The WTO will continue the existing database that compiles digital-trade-related training and capacity building programmes of international and regional organizations.
  5. We agree to maintain the current practice of not imposing customs duties on electronic transmissions until 31 December 2030. Unless Members agree to extend the moratorium and the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce in the 16<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference, or in case the 16<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference is delayed beyond 31 December 2030, the moratorium and the Work Programme should expire on 31 December 2030. In the meantime, Members agree to conduct a focused review of this decision and intensified discussions to seek a common understanding on the scope, definition, and impact of this decision. We agree to deepen dialogue by reviewing existing empirical evidence and gathering additional empirical evidence on the impact of this moratorium on the economies of developing and least developed Members, and seek a common understanding on the scope and definition.
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## DRAFT YAOUNDÉ MINISTERIAL DECLARATION ON WTO REFORM

We recognize the contribution of the WTO to the economic growth of its Members over the past 30 years and that it continues to perform valuable functions. At the same time, we acknowledge that the WTO faces serious challenges that require necessary reform. While we hold differing views on the challenges and solutions, we commit to work urgently and in good faith following MC14 to advance reforms, recalling the progress and outcomes made in MC12 and MC13. In this context, we instruct our officials to intensify their work with a view to providing concrete and substantive recommendations for action by MC15. We will undertake a mid-term review in advance of MC15 to assess progress and provide further directions.

### WTO REFORM WORK PLAN

#### **Decision-Making, Development, including S&DT, Level Playing Field Issues and Foundational issues**

We note that Members engaged in reform discussions leading up to MC14 in various areas, including the three areas as reflected in the Reform Facilitator's Reports: **Decision-making, Development, including S&DT, and Level Playing Field**. We engaged in discussions on these areas at Yaoundé and agree that work on these three issues will continue post MC14. We also had discussions on **Foundational Issues** at MC14 – including systemic issues such as WTO principles and the balance of rights and obligations. Post MC14 discussions will include these issues. Among other things, further context is in the Facilitator's reports and the reports of the MC14 Minister Facilitators.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Dispute Settlement**

We acknowledge that the WTO Dispute Settlement System is not fully and well-functioning and needs to be reformed. We agree that consultations on dispute settlement reform, under the auspices of the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB), should continue following MC14.

#### **Modalities**

**Authority:** Work will be conducted under the authority of the General Council. Dispute Settlement Reform will be under the auspices of the DSB. The WTO Reform process shall be Member-driven, open, transparent, and inclusive, and address the interests of all Members.

WTO Reform Facilitators for each of the reform areas shall be appointed by decision of the General Council at its next meeting. Failing that, the General Council Chairperson shall appoint Facilitators based on consultations with Members. Facilitators will facilitate discussions based on Members' submissions and contributions. They shall be accountable, and report regularly, to the General Council.

The General Council Chairperson will oversee and coordinate the overall process to ensure coherence across workstreams and avoid scheduling overlaps. The capacity constraints of Members, especially of resource-constrained delegations, will be taken into account in scheduling meetings.

**Indicative Timelines/checkpoints:** Work will resume in April 2026.

Progress reports to the General Council will be provided in July 2026, December 2026, July 2027, and December 2027, with senior officials participating as necessary. We will conduct at least one midway review ahead of MC15. The report produced in July 2026 may include, but shall not be limited to, a stocktaking across all identified reform areas.

**Flexibility:** The Work Plan is designed to remain flexible to ensure responsiveness and institutional agility. The identification of any particular issue as a "focus" issue or an otherwise important issue will not be interpreted in any way as limiting the scope of issues Members can address in the reform process or imply any particular sequencing. Moreover, this reform process will be without prejudice to work in any WTO committee or other body.

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<sup>1</sup> [JOB/GC/483](#), [JOB/GC/491](#) and [WT/MIN\(26\)/39](#). The Facilitator's and Minister Facilitators' reports do not represent consensus documents but are issued under the responsibility of the Facilitator and the Minister Facilitators, respectively.