

Statement of Tudor Ulianoschi

Candidate to the Director General of the WTO

General Council, Selection Process for the Director General, 16 July 2020

Thank you Mr. Chair,
Ambassadors, delegates, members of the Secretariat,

you know me as the Moldovan Ambassador to the WTO, others may know me as
multilateral trading system and a person fully committed to the work and objectives
of the WTO.

I have a diplomatic and political career of over 16 years. This experience helped me
develop a particular set of professional skills and networking, which T1sn5 w(4(et).e)JTJETBT

regional and multilateral levels with countries from all of the continents. I have
always advocated for free, fair, inclusive and transparent trade.

What I bring to the table is my political experience as a ~~former~~ ~~Minister~~

in my capacity
as a recent Minister dealing with Ministers.

Second D is Dialogue and discussions with Geneva based Ambassadors in my
capacity as former Ambassador to the WTO I was in your shoes and fully
understand the process of work, its challenges and the potential efficient and
effective solutions.

outcomes, **2)** safeguarding and improving the WTO's two-tiered dispute settlement system **3)** improving compliance with notifications obligations, as well as in general, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the WTO's monitoring and transparency function.

What can be measured can be one take it will less likely work.

That is why, the future Director General needs to take action with a view to bringing Members to the negotiating table, with the goal of focusing on achieving results and score some important wins - for the credibility of the negotiation function of this organization and re-create an atmosphere of trust among Members.

STRATEGIC VISION AND STEPS

WTO is a member-driven organization where decisions on rule-making and implementation have to be made by the Members. However, in order to make progress there is a need to have a viable forum for negotiations where Members can meet to discuss and reach consensus. On a more conceptual level, we need to think of modernizing the global trade agenda, upgrade it so it responds better and faster to 21th century challenges.

At the strategic level, the future Director General should bear in mind four strategic priorities:

1. Engage in every effort to stop any deterioration or decline of the multilateral trading system;
2. Focus on smaller, incremental gains;
3. Get negotiations started again in the WTO;
4. Bring members together and come up with a long-term vision for the WTO.

In terms of immediate priorities for the future Director General of the WTO, the following should be considered (including in the preparation process for MC12):

1. Efforts to reactivate the Appellate Body, to ensure a prompt resolution of trade disputes;
2. Build upon the progress achieved already on the fisheries subsidies negotiations and strongly support Members to achieve a negotiated text by MC12;
3. Facilitating dialogue with Members regarding on-going negotiations on the remaining and other important issues.
4. Further encouraging and supporting discussions on new and existing Joint Initiatives, particularly: on Electronic Commerce, Investment Facilitation for Development, Domestic Services Regulation, as well as the dialogs of the informal group on MSMES and SMEs and others.

5. Promoting negotiations of new commercial disciplines and address issues of the digital environment and new areas of intellectual property.
6. Dealing with the trade-environment nexus, including by supporting Members efforts and discussions to create a circular economy, addressing plastic pollution and other various trade and environment initiatives.
7. Ensuring further promotion of transparency and necessity of withdrawal (as soon as feasible and possible) of trade restrictive measures imposed in the context of COVID-19. Seeking ways and examining roles of existent programs (Aid for Trade, Enhanced Integrated Framework, the International Trade Centre, the Standards and Trade Development Facility) in supporting post pandemic economic recovery of some of the developing and least-developed countries.
8. Promotion of the transparency principle and the importance of compliance with notification obligations.

Dispute Settlement

on hold. There are certainly lessons to be learned from this unprecedented situation. But one thing is clear: COVID-19 has highlighted the interconnectedness of global economies, trade and societies.

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, transparent, efficient information-sharing is crucial for traders and governments and as I have seen during current pandemic - WTO Members, with the assistance of the Secretariat, reacted promptly by commendably notifying the export restricting measures imposed in the context of pandemic, as well as by joining a series of initiatives supporting open and predictable, nondistorted, facilitated trade (including in agri-food products and medical supplies), well functioning of supply chains, statements highlighting the importance of MSMEs in these unprecedented times, on the facilitation of the flow of goods and services as well as the essential movement of people, etc.

I believe that providing timely transparency with respect to trade and trade-related measures taken or withdrawn in the context of the COVID-19 crisis was of critical importance and relevance. Members need to seek further monitorization of these measures on an ad hoc basis, stressing *that trade restrictive emergency measures aimed at protecting health, shall be imposed only if deemed necessary,.. and these shall be targeted, proportionate, transparent and temporary, not create unnecessary barriers to trade or disruption to global supply chains, and be consistent with WTO rules.* In the same time its necessary to continue to advocate for withdrawal of such measures as soon as situation improves.

In the same context, the WTO should continue to join efforts of international organizations as WB, IMF, OECD, FAO, WFP, WHO to analyze the impacts of COVID-19 on global agricultural supplies, distribution chains and agri-food production and trade, as well as on seeking ways and examining roles of programs in supporting economic recovery, particularly of the developing and least-developed countries.

Digital trade has proven to be a critical issue in the current crisis and its development would contribute to building resilience and crisis response in the future. In this process we have to be fully aware of the issue of capacity and we need to make sure that this process should be inclusive. However, I do believe that WTO should be modernized in the digital world.

If you trust me with the honor to be your next Director General, I will use my