

HE MOHAMMAD MAZAID AL-TUWAIJIRI
Statement to the WTO General Council
17 July 2020

Your Excellency Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Excellencies and Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before I start my statement, I would like to express my sincere, personal solidarity towards all people and governments affected by the tragedy caused by the COVID-

essential part of the response to the pandemic itself, and will be key to our collective recovery. The crisis that we see today further emphasizes the importance of working collectively to advance our common interests.

But, Your Excellencies, what is our True North? How will the WTO be guided to its destination? I would now like to talk through with you my impression of the problem, and to share my approach to staying on course for the WTO.

History has shown us again and again that crises can inspire both coordination and cooperation. The GATT and the WTO both emerged from major upheavals and uncertainties over the last century. COVID-19 presents no less of a challenge, and requires no less of an inspired vision and strong leadership, especially because it affects all countries and people at the same time.

So, Your Excellencies, I look forward to the questions that you will ask a bit later, but at this point, I propose to consider three questions of my own:

First, what **opportunities and solutions** will emerge from current challenges?

Second, how can Members work together to leverage new ideas, new rules and new technologies to solve the emerging problems that we face today, and the issues that will arise tomorrow?

However, from my point of view, we can also probably agree that the delivery of results under the main pillars of the WTO system has drifted off course, and that reform is now more urgent than ever, or the WTO risks losing its way.

In my view, we should question: in what manner and to what extent is the system not delivering – and, most importantly, WHY is it not delivering? I have many specific

[REDACTED] here on the approach to continuous reform that I would apply as WTO DG, if granted this honor0.005w €2-16

government. For any system, goals and objectives are only meaningful if they are actually delivered.

Again, the WTO is no different. If entrusted with the DG leadership mandate, I would establish **critical success factors** from Members' **goals and objectives**. Then, we would establish **key performance indicators** to allow the objective measurement of performance of the core functions of dispute settlement, monitoring and negotiations.

Finally, as DG, with the help of the Secretariat, we would **collect evidence and data**, and **calculate metrics** to help you all understand where goals are being reached, or where performance on WTO objectives is falling short. This **structured analysis** would help Members to understand what changes of direction or re-focus in priorities are required to achieve their objectives.

If selected, I can promise that performance assessment and adjustment will need to continue as long as the WTO exists, because international trade, business and societal needs will change as much over the next 4, 8 and 25 years, as they have changed since 1995. As part of this effort, feedback loops of constructive suggestions will be encouraged to deliver continuous improvement.

If we do not respond to shortcomings, the system will not run smoothly, stakeholders will become dissatisfied, and alternative means will be found outside the WTO to achieve your goals and objectives.

The WTO needs a DG who helps Members to guide the system forward by constantly **assessing performance** and helping find ways to introduce gradual transitions

But this "performance" might be called "maintaining the status quo". This is not good enough. In fact, as we see today, standing in place while the world is moving

Your Excellencies, no one has all the answers. But under my leadership as WTO

CLOSING STATEMENT

Your Excellencies, it is clear to everyone that the road ahead of the WTO will be very difficult. When we emerge from the current hardships of COVID-19 and trade tensions, we will need to reform and rebuild in order to move ahead. I believe that this effort needs to begin urgently.

I have confidence in the WTO. I believe in its principles, and in its ability to deliver on the goals set by Members. And most importantly, I believe in you, in Members' ability to work collectively in the common interest to stay strong, and bound together for our mutual benefit.

As we say, [Arabic] –

This means “In no way can you break a bundle of sticks bound together. But (١٠.٦٥٦٦٠ -1.214 TD