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20 July 2021, 13h30-14h30

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Good afternoon from Geneva, and welcome to this session of Simply Services on "COVID-19, cross-border mobility and trade".

For those who are not familiar with the concept, - is an informal platform

consumers, and international mobility is one way to attain this proximity. The cross-border movement of businesspeople is also an important indirect facilitator of services trade, for instance in relation to services that are supplied remotely or through a commercial presence abroad, as well for goods trade, given that it helps reduce information and transaction costs.

It will therefore come as no surprise that

- by the temporary border closures and travel restrictions introduced to mitigate the risks of COVID-19 transmission. Latest available estimates suggest that, in 2020, the value of global services trade was down 21% year-on-year, more than double the decline, of "only" 9%, for trade in goods. Among the sectors that have suffered most are, again unsurprisingly given their reliance on mobility, tourism



Finally, my name is , I am Counsellor in the Trade in Services and Investment Division of the WTO Secretariat and will be moderating today's session.