



Council of the
European Union

**Brussels, 10 December 2017
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WTO 312

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	First Council conclusions on the 11th World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference

Delegations will find in Annex the first Council conclusions on the 11th World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference, as adopted by the Council on 10 December 2017.

First Council conclusions
on the 11th World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference

1. Firm in the belief that trade contributes to creating wealth and jobs, the European Union is committed to an open and rules-based multilateral trading system, with a central role for the WTO. The EU supports an ambitious but realistic and balanced package for the 11th World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference (MC11) in Buenos Aires, and expects all WTO members to make a constructive and adequate contribution, fully reflecting their capacities. The EU will resist any attempts to undermine or weaken the multilateral system, including dispute settlement as one of its central pillars. The EU is ready to explore ways to strengthen the WTO, including its negotiating, monitoring and dispute settlement functions.
2. The Council supports a good substantive outcome on fisheries subsidies, which goes beyond illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU) and which includes clear disciplines.
3. The Council recalls that the joint EU and Brazil proposal on domestic support in agriculture, represents a reasonable and balanced approach to addressing domestic support and public stockholdings for food security purposes in a comprehensive manner. For the EU, domestic support in agriculture is closely linked to the question of public stockholding for food security purposes. The Council is ready to support reasonable and balanced outcomes in these areas, and to take into account requests of developing and, in particular, least-developed countries, without prejudice to current or future discussions on the EU's agricultural policy.

4. The Council is also attached to achieving progress at MC11 on e-commerce, domestic regulation in services, transparency and good regulatory practices concerning small and medium-sized enterprises, investment facilitation, as well as MSMEs (micro, small and medium sized enterprises) and export restrictions in agriculture. The Council also attaches particular importance to advancing discussion in the WTO on horizontal subsidies. The Council underlines in this regard the necessity to explore possible ways of advancing on these individual issues. In this respect, the Council welcomes joint statements by interested Members on these issues setting out the way forward with a view to deepening multilateral discussions.
 5. The Council supports the Commission in its efforts to make the Conference a success and looks forward to good coordination between Member States and the Commission at MC11. The Council will assess the progress made with a view to reaching a balanced outcome in line with the conditions set out above. To this end, the Council looks forward to the Commission's proposals for EU negotiating positions on draft texts discussed within the WTO. It also looks forward to the submission by the Commission of the WTO negotiated texts for Council approval on behalf of the EU before their final adoption by the WTO bodies.
 6. The Council welcomes and endorses the Joint Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment to be made on the occasion of the 11th World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference.
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