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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Declaration marking the 20th anniversary of the Aid-for-Trade Initiative and 10th Global Review of Aid for Trade

Delegations will find attached a Note from the Commission on the WTO Declaration marking the 20th anniversary of the Aid-for-Trade Initiative and 10th Global Review of Aid for Trade.

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THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AID-FOR-TRADE INITIATIVE:
AID FOR TRADE: PARTNERSHIPS FOR TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

COMMUNICATION FROM AUSTRALIA AND BARBADOS

Revision

The following communication, dated 19 October 2026, is being circulated at the request of the delegations of Australia and Barbados.

AID FOR TRADE: PARTNERSHIPS FOR TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

The 20th Anniversary of the WTO Aid-for-Trade Initiative presents an opportunity to acknowledge the mutual efforts of WTO Members to foster trade and private sector growth within developing and least developed countries (LDCs) in order to benefit from opportunities offered by the multilateral trading system.

The Initiative was launched at the Sixth WTO Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong in 2005, with the aim to bolster supply-side capacity and trade-related infrastructure; facilitate, implement and adjust to trade reform and liberalization; and support trade negotiations and assist implementation of WTO agreements.

The Initiative has encouraged provision of trade-related technical assistance and capacity building to help developing and least developed economies enhance their use of trade as an instrument for economic growth and greater integration into the multilateral trading system.

It is equally important to recognize that the changing international environment and the evolving nature of global trade means developing Members, including LDCs, landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), small economies and small island developing states (SIDS) will continue to benefit from appropriate support to build institutional capacity needed to implement WTO rules and improve their trade regimes, including their regulatory practices. Trade-related technical assistance and capacity building may assist developing and least developed Members to implement WTO rules, foster trade capacity and build the necessary soft and hard infrastructure to facilitate trade. Initiatives, such as the Enhanced Integrated Framework Phase 3, the WTO Fisheries Funding Mechanism and the Standards and Trade Development Facility, along with regional and bilateral partnerships can contribute in this regard.

The current landscape in official development assistance (ODA) calls for more efficient and impactful use of available resources and, where appropriate, mobilizing additional resources through partnerships to complement ODA flows. These resources can play a leveraging role in supporting greater investment opportunities in developing and least developed Members, including by catalyzing and attracting private investment including domestic resource mobilization. There is a shared commitment to strengthen coordination among providers, including donors, South-South partners, triangular cooperation, implementing organizations, multilateral development banks, and the private sector, and deepen exchange between all actors, to improve accessibility and promote coherence in delivery.

As we acknowledge the 20th Anniversary of the Initiative at the 10th Global Review of Aid for Trade, we call for an increased focus on forms of trade and development cooperation underpinned by partnerships and to better reflect this reality for a repositioning of the initiative for its 20th anniversary as follows: 'Aid for Trade: Partnerships for Trade and Development'.

We propose the following draft declaration:

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"DECLARATION MARKING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AID-FOR-TRADE INITIATIVE AND 10TH GLOBAL REVIEW OF AID FOR TRADE"

We call for a refocusing of the Aid-for-Trade Initiative to reflect the importance of technical assistance and capacity building predicated on partnership, while reaffirming the importance of the objective to support developing and least developed Members to implement trade rules and build trade-related capacity, thereby facilitating their integration into the global trading system.

In marking the 20th Anniversary, we reposition the initiative as "Aid for Trade: Partnerships for Trade and Development".

We recognize the importance of trade-related technical assistance and capacity building that aligns with national and regional priorities, responds to the diverse needs of Members and delivers results with accountability. Acknowledging the changing landscape of ODA, we also recognize the need to attract and scale private sector investment through trade and development cooperation and to leverage private and blended finance to crowd in additional resources.

At the 10th Global Review of Aid for Trade, we also note the critical role of monitoring and evaluation in promoting accountability, cooperation, effectiveness and peer-learning in the delivery of the technical assistance and capacity-building and in demonstrating its impact. We further acknowledge the role played by the WTO in monitoring and evaluating global Aid for Trade flows in collaboration with other international organizations, including the OECD.

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