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DRAFT DECISION ON REGIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS

COMMUNICATION FROM BRAZIL

The following communication, dated 17 December 2015, is being circulated at the request of the Delegation of Brazil.

Ministers,

Reaffirming the need to ensure that Regional Trade Agreements (RTAs) remain complementary to, not a substitute for, the multilateral trading system;

Convinced that the Transparency Mechanism for RTAs, established in 2006 by the General Council, plays a key role in enhancing transparency in, and understanding of, RTAs and that the understanding of their effects will be of benefit to all Members;

Having regard also to the transparency provisions of Article XXIV of GATT 1994, the Understanding on the Interpretation of Article XXIV of GATT 1994 ("GATT Understanding"), Article V of GATS and the 1979 Decision on Differential and More Favourable Treatment, Reciprocity and Fuller Participation of Developing Countries ("Enabling Clause");

Decide

1. To instruct the Committee on Regional Trade Agreements (CRTA) to discuss the systemic implications of RTAs for the multilateral trading system and their coherence with WTO rules.
2. To work towards the transformation of the current provisional Transparency Mechanism into a permanent mechanism, in accordance with the General Council Decision of 14 December 2006, with a view to enhancing transparency in, and understanding of, RTAs and their effects. This work will be carried out by the CRTA.
3. To instruct the CRTA to report the outcomes of these works to the General Council, for further guidance and its appropriate actions on these matters, within twelve months from the date of this decision, aiming to conclude this exercise by the MC-11, that we agreed to hold in 2017.