

Excerpts from the speaking notes of the Chair of the Negotiating Group on Rules, Ambassador Santiago Wills

- Despite difficult circumstances, our Group has managed to make progress with an exemplary level of engagement and participation. I am encouraged that we have been engaged in a genuinely intense and continuous negotiating mode.
 - I have been fortunate to find a good friend, Ambassador Chambovey of Switzerland, to assist me. As a Friend of the Chair, Ambassador Chambovey is helping us to move forward on special and differential treatment. I was informed that he has already begun to consult with many of you since last week.
 - As I indicated in my email of 26 October, the purpose of this meeting is to present the first revision of the draft consolidated document RD/TN/RL/126.
 - In putting forward the revision, I am mindful of the TNC guidelines that negotiating Chairs, through the negotiating process, should "aim to facilitate consensus" and to "seek to evolve consensus texts".
 - I also have heard the calls from many delegations to do this by using my judgement to put forward draft amendments aimed at compromise solutions. In doing so, my intention is to try to find language that ultimately all delegations will be able to live with, even if it does not reflect 100% of anyone's preferences.
 - I am confident that all delegations will find things to like in the changes that I am proposing, and that this revision thus will represent a forward step in the evolution of our work toward that full consensus.
 - The entire text remains in brackets, and is entirely without prejudice to any Member's position on any issues addressed in the document. In other words, I have continued to avoid a "Christmas tree" approach that would seek to reflect every suggestion that has been made.
 - In turn, in facilitating our collective work, I have been guided by and done my utmost to implement the foundational principles of impartiality, objectivity, inclusiveness, and transparency which underpin all WTO negotiations. In developing the suggested changes introduced in the revised draft, I identified three types of issues based on our collective work:
 - First, there were some areas of substance that could be clarified or options that could be narrowed based on our work so far.
 - Second, there were placeholders with no text where some text could be proposed, with brackets where necessary, based on our work.
 - Third, there were purely technical glitches or clarifications, including editorial or formatting errors, that could be resolved.
 - Given the current situation with the pandemic and the measures on meetings and movements that continue to change, I think we need to remain flexible. To this end, and for now, I envision taking some time to talk to you bilaterally or in small groups with the possibility of joining virtually for everyone. I will let you know as soon as I have a more concrete plan in this regard.
 - And I count on you in receiving this revised version, reading it, and analysing it with a mindset focused on compromise, finding flexibilities, and of course, as has been mentioned before, in not seeking for your preferred language to be exactly reflected in the text, but instead to seek and accept language you can live with.
 - As one final remark, I remind you that the whole text of this revision, as was the first draft, is in brackets and that it is without prejudice to any Member's views. In addition, what is reflected here, and what is not, has nothing to do with whether I prefer one text or another. My role as a Chair is to evolve consensus texts, but in an impartial and objective manner. You can count on me that I take these and my other duties extremely seriously.
- [News item: Fisheries subsidies negotiations chair introduces revised draft consolidated text \(https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news20_e/fish_02nov20_e.htm\)](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news20_e/fish_02nov20_e.htm)