



JOINT STATEMENT ON OPEN AND PREDICTABLE TRADE IN AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD PRODUCTS

The following communication, dated 6 May 2022, is being circulated at the request of the delegations of Albania; Australia; Canada; Chile; Costa Rica; European Union; Georgia; Iceland; Israel; Japan; Republic of Korea; Liechtenstein; Mexico; Republic of Moldova; Montenegro; New Zealand; North Macedonia; Norway; Paraguay; Singapore; Switzerland; The Separate Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu; Ukraine; United Kingdom and United States.

1. We reiterate our support for UN General Assembly Resolutions A/RES/ES-11/1 on 2 March 2022 and A/RES/ES-11/2 on 24 March 2022 and we express our support and solidarity with the people of Ukraine. We are gravely concerned about the ongoing suffering of not only the direct victims in Ukraine, but also the further effects on the world economy and trade.

2. Impediments to exports as a result of the conflict, especially given Ukraine is one of the world's top exporters of key agricultural products (e.g. wheat, maize, barley, sunflower oil) and a major supplier to the World Food Programme, have significant local, regional and global effects on food security, adding to the already severe situation caused by COVID-19. All of these effects will also be felt through global food supply chains and increases to the already high prices for agricultural commodities and inputs.

3. We reaffirm the urgency and importance of maintaining open and predictable agricultural markets and trade to ensure the continued flow of food, as well as products, services and inputs essential for agricultural and food production and supply chains. We also recognise the importance of exercising restraint in excessive stockpiling and hoarding of agricultural products affected by this crisis that are traditionally exported.

4. We also emphasise the value of the Agriculture Market Information System (AMIS) and recognise the important role played by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and other international organisations in providing analysis and data to inform policy decisions.

5. To that end, we are committed to:

- working together to help ensure that sufficient, safe, affordable and nutritious food continues to be available and accessible at all times to all people, including the poorest, the most vulnerable, and displaced people;
- keeping our food and agricultural markets open, predictable and transparent by not imposing unjustified trade restrictive measures on agricultural and agri-food products or key agricultural production inputs. The application of these measures, particularly unjustified export prohibitions and restrictions on agricultural and agri-food products, increases uncertainty and can result in a spiral of price increases and further restrictions;
- ensuring emergency measures introduced to mitigate food security impacts should be as least-distortive as possible, targeted, proportionate and temporary, in accordance with WTO rules, in order to allow markets and the flow of food to operate as efficiently as possible;

- providing information to the WTO as soon as practicable of any trade-related measures affecting agriculture and agri-food products where possible, to ensure clarity and predictability, and ensuring their consistency with WTO rules;
- not imposing export prohibitions or restrictions on foodstuffs purchased for non-commercial humanitarian purposes by the World Food Programme and call on all Members to adopt a Decision to this effect as soon as possible;
- improving transparency and monitoring of trade measures at the WTO, including through requesting a standing agenda item on trade and food security at the Committee on Agriculture and inviting the Secretariat to provide regular analysis of the current food crisis in cooperation with other relevant international organizations to inform Members in their policy-making.

6. We believe that strengthening the multilateral trading system, with the WTO at its centre, and progressing agriculture reform at the WTO in accordance with Article 20 of the Agreement on Agriculture will contribute to sustainable development and help ensure more resilient, efficient and sustainable food systems against future crises.

7. Ensuring open and predictable agricultural markets and trade is key to mitigating multifaceted short and long-term risks and achieving global food security. That requires greater action and engagement now more than ever, including at the 12th Ministerial Conference.
