

UK statement to the WTO Dispute Settlement Body

Thank you, Chair.

The United Kingdom continues its support for this proposal for the launch of the selection process and we refer to our previous statement on this agenda item. We also support the statement made by Mexico on behalf of all co-sponsors.

The United Kingdom is a strong supporter of the WTO dispute settlement system, as a central pillar of the rules-based multilateral trading system. An effective and binding dispute settlement mechanism ensures that the rules we have negotiated are enforceable, preserving the rights and obligations of all Members.

We continue to be concerned that the WTO Membership has not been able to launch the selection process for new Appellate Body members, with the result that the Appellate Body is unable to hear new appeals. We are seeing the concrete impairment of rights which is arising from this situation.

We also wish to reiterate that the United Kingdom is committed to finding a resolution to the impasse with the Appellate Body which carries the support of all WTO Members. We understand the long-standing concerns that have been raised, and we recognise that in a consensus-based organisation like the WTO, any dispute resolution mechanism must carry the trust of all Members. We stand ready to play a full role in future discussions on dispute settlement reform.

However, we also consider that finding a solution should not stand in the way of the continued functioning of the system and the launch of the Appellate Body selection process. We therefore call on all Members to act to restore the system to full functioning, whilst we prioritise discussions on a long-term solution.