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General Council

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WORK PROGRAMME ON E-COMMERCE

COMMUNICATION FROM AUSTRALIA, CANADA, CHILE, THE EUROPEAN UNION,
THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA, MEXICO, MONTENEGRO, NORWAY AND PARAGUAY

Revision¹

The following communication, dated 26 October 2017, is being circulated at the request of the delegations of Australia, Canada, Chile, the European Union, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Montenegro, Norway and Paraguay.

DRAFT MINISTERIAL DECISION ON ELECTRONIC COMMERCE

Members,

Welcoming the report from the General Council Chairman on the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce;

Reaffirming the growing importance of global electronic commerce and its potential to create new opportunities for inclusive trade and development;

Recognizing the need to advance on electronic commerce in order to better harness these opportunities;

Recognizing the challenges and opportunities faced by developing countries, especially LDCs, in relation to e-commerce;

Building upon the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce and without prejudice to the mandates of existing WTO Agreements and bodies;

Having regard to the Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization, in particular Article III:2;

Decide as follows:

1. To establish a Working Party on Electronic Commerce. This Working Party shall conduct preparations for and carry out negotiations on trade-related aspects of electronic commerce on the basis of proposals by Members.
2. The Working Party shall establish its own procedures and shall report periodically to the General Council. The Working Party shall hold its first meeting no later than 31 March 2018.
3. The first General Council of 2018 shall appoint the Chairperson of the Working Party.
4. Members will maintain the current practice of not imposing customs duties on electronic transmissions until our next session, which we decided to hold in 2019.

¹ This revision is to add Mexico and Montenegro as co-sponsors to the submission.