

ACP Group Statement on the appointment of the new Director General of the WTO

15th February 2021

Thank you Chair.

I take the floor on behalf of the ACP Group to congratulate Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala on her appointment as Director General of the WTO.

We thank Dr. Okonjo-Iweala for taking up this mantle. The ACP Group conveys special thanks to the Government of Nigeria for submitting her nomination and for that country's efforts in ensuring Dr. Okonjo-Iweala's appointment.

The ACP Group takes this opportunity to commend you, Chair, and the Chairs of the DSB and TPRB for the diligence, confidentiality, integrity and professionalism that characterised the selection process.

Since Ambassador Roberto Azevedo demitted Office on 31st August 2020, the WTO Secretariat has stayed the course and continued its tradition of effective and efficient service to members. For this, the ACP Group wishes to thank the staff of the Secretariat and, particularly, acknowledge the excellent leadership of the Deputy Directors General during the interim period.

Not only are we pleased that Dr. Okonjo-Iweala will be the first woman to lead the WTO but the ACP Group is also honoured that for the first time, there is a WTO Director General from the Group.

The ACP Group acknowledges the unprecedented difficulties facing the WTO at this time and, hence, the challenging environment within which the new Director General will operate. We believe, however, that Dr. Okonjo-Iweala has a vast and intimate knowledge of the global economy and global trade. Her decades of experience in multilateralism, economic relations among states and international development will be an asset for the WTO at this time. We have no doubt that she will hit the ground running and continue her tradition of excellence as well as that of her predecessors.

The ACP Group commits to working with the new Director General and also pledges its support and cooperation in ensuring that her tenure is a resounding success for the WTO and the multilateral trading system.

I Thank you, Chair