

UK statement to the WTO General Council: DG Selection Process

Thank you, Chair.

And at the outset, I'd like to pay tribute on behalf of the United Kingdom to you and your co-facilitators for handling this process with such professionalism and integrity.

The way in which you have charted the way ahead for the membership at each stage; how you laid out the criteria behind your recommendations; how you sought Members' views across the rounds of confessionals – all have been exemplary and highly reassuring.

And I want to personally thank you for all that you have done to support the WTO's decision-making process at what is such a critical time.

I would also like to salute the eight candidates that have taken part in the process thus far. From the moment nominations closed, through the presentations to the membership in Geneva, and during the weeks thereafter, the campaigns have been positive and forward-looking.

Any one of the eight candidates would have made an excellent DG. In particular, I want to thank my fellow nominating Permanent Representatives for all of their positive engagement on behalf of their nominees and the engagement of their teams as well, I know they've all put in a huge amount of work into these campaigns.

Following the recommendations of the Chair and his facilitators, the United Kingdom will withdraw the candidacy of Dr Liam Fox. We are extremely grateful for the confidence and support and time that Dr Fox received from the membership during his campaign and I'd like to thank all of you on his behalf and on behalf of the UK.

And although Dr Fox's candidacy will not now be taken further forward, we believe that his messages about the importance of finding a Director-General with a dedicated track record of commitment to the multilateral trading system, aligned to the political experience necessary to bring new momentum to our discussions here, have resonated widely amongst the membership.

The United Kingdom will continue to deepen our engagement with the WTO and we firmly believe that a healthy and prosperous world rests on a predictable, rules-based international trading system.

So once again Chair, many thanks to you and your colleagues for your wise stewardship. The UK sincerely wishes the very best to those candidates going forward, and we look forward to working closely and cooperatively with the new Director-General.

Thank you very much.