

WTO Trade Policy Review of Mexico: UK Statement

Chair, let me speak, for the first time at a TPR, on behalf of His Majesty's Government and to welcome the Mexican delegation under the leadership of the Undersecretary of Foreign Trade, Luz María De La Mora. Thanks to the Mexican Federal Government and the WTO for their reports. Let me also thank the Chair and our distinguished Discussant, Clare Kelly for kindly facilitating this Trade Policy Review and providing us such an insightful basis for our discussions.

In our written questions for this Review, we were keen to gain a deeper understanding of Mexico's regulatory framework in areas including Intellectual Property, domestic regulating bodies and agencies, the government procurement regime, Trade in Services, and SPS measures. This broad range of questions covering a panoply of themes is an indication of the range of opportunities available to Mexican and UK business from our accelerating bilateral trade.

Chair, this review includes a period of acute economic instability globally. WE are therefore pleased to welcome the positive steps which the Mexican Federal Government took to mitigate these shocks, notably through the expansion of digitisation services for administrative procedures for imports and agri-food exports.

It is encouraging that in periods of economic stress, actions such as these demonstrate that opportunities can be found, notably digital opportunities, which can accelerate best practice and improve the free trading environment. This also builds on previous efforts to reform customs procedures, as identified during Mexico's last TPR, back in 2017.

In that TPR, the then Chair outlined in her concluding remarks Member's concerns that Mexico's trade was highly dependent on a single export market, noting that there was a need to diversify. During this review period, Mexico has indeed enacted some of the suggestions made to address this, including strengthening economic ties with different trading partners.

To this same end, the UK was pleased to sign a Trade Continuity Agreement (TCA) with Mexico which came into force on 1 June last year. We look forward to delivering our Factual Presentation to the Committee on Regional Trade Agreements next month

To realise the full potential of our trading relationship, Mexico and the UK launched negotiations in London on 20 May this year to secure a more modern and comprehensive bilateral FTA. As Mexico highlighted in its Report to this review, we have agreed on the modernisation of rules relating to investment and intellectual property, and the inclusion of innovative provisions relating to SMEs, gender and innovation, among others. We look forward to bringing this agreement to fruition as soon as we can and to our businesses

making full use of the opportunities that the FTA should offer to grow their business and generate prosperity for British and Mexican citizens.

As others have noted, Mexico has also signed agreements with the United States, Canada, and the EU, and has signed the entry-into-force of the CPTPP. As the Secretariat recognises in its Report, these and other preferential trade agreements demonstrate the importance that regionalism plays in Mexico's trade relations.

Back In 2017, Members also encouraged Mexico to join plurilateral agreements, notably the GPA. We would welcome Mexico's indication of progress from Mexico with regards to this key plurilateral agreement.

Let me welcome Mexico's support for the Inclusive Trade Action Group ITAG and Global Trade and Gender Arrangement (GTAGA), as well as its engagement in the WTO own Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender. All these important initiatives help to increase women's economic empowerment through enhanced trade opportunities, an objective the UK fully shares with Mexico.

Through our Embassy in Mexico City, the UK has been pleased to work with Mexico on developing a methodology to measure the wage gap in Mexico and help to identify a remedy. This is an on-going and important work, and we encourage Mexico to continue to advance the necessary actions in order to reap the full reward of Mexico's ambitions in this area.

Regarding transparency, like others the UK notes that less than 200 measures have been recorded by Mexico in the WTO's Trade Monitoring Database, a low notification level in both relative and absolute terms. The median G20 Member notifies around 400 measures. Notifications and transparency obligations are we all recognise a cornerstone of the ongoing success of the WTO, and we therefore encourage Mexico to continue their efforts to ensure maximum levels of transparency regarding notifications.

Furthermore, recent data suggests that of 257 policy intervention measures in force, 69% (or 177of them) are trade restrictive rather than trade-facilitating. As such, the UK encourages Mexico to pursue balanced trade policies.

As the Secretariat's Report identifies, Mexico is working to open-up untapped potential within its economy. Export diversification and the spreading of regional exporting opportunities have significant potential to achieve this, expanding the benefits of free trade at a global level and contributing to an improved, strengthened international trading system, it s in all our interest. The UK looks forward to working with our Mexican partners to help make the most of these opportunities.

Finally Madame Chair we like to thank the delegation Mexico for their fruitful engagement in this important transparency exercise and we wish them a successful 7th Trade Policy Review, and thank the Distinguished PR and excellent team to reap all possibilities of WTO

Thank you, Chair.