

NEGOTIATING GROUP ON RULES – FISHERIES SUBSIDIES

Monday, 10 July 2023, 10:00 AM

SPEAKING NOTES FOR DDG ANGELA ELLARD

- Thank you, Ambassador Gunnarsson. Good morning, Excellencies and colleagues. Welcome to the fourth Fish Week. As always, it is wonderful to see so many of you here today, including from capital, showing the commitment from all of you to get this very important work done.

Acceptances

- Concerning acceptance of the Agreement by Members, I know that many of you are busy with your domestic acceptance processes. Many Members have been reaching out to engage the Secretariat with their capitals in this respect. We are always ready and very pleased to provide any support that we can.
- I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Nigeria, Belize, China, and Japan on having deposited their instruments of acceptance with the Director-General since the June cluster of meetings. We are now approaching 40, with more to come I expect before we break for summer. I look forward to hearing your updates over the course of the week.

Fish Fund

- I would also like to thank the Netherlands and France, which have each contributed EUR 1 million to the WTO Fisheries Trust Fund since our last Fish Week. I understand that some other pledges and donations may be forthcoming shortly, and I look forward to thanking those additional donors. Our process for recruiting staff to manage the Fund is almost finished, and the Secretariat is moving ahead with the set-up work as quickly as possible, so that the Fund will be ready to receive applications.

Trade and Environment week session

- I would also like to note that on 21 June, as part of the Trade and Environment week, I moderated a session on acceptances of the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, titled "Race to Entry into Force".
- We had a panel of Ambassadors and senior representatives from 8 WTO Members who are among the very first to deposit their instruments of acceptance of the Agreement. We asked them to share their experiences in their ratification processes, why they found it important to ratify quickly, and how they see the Agreement contributing to the global responses to loss of biodiversity and protection of our oceans.

- I want to thank again all the Members that participated in that session. It was a most enlightening panel, and I am certain that the perspectives and anecdotes we heard that day are being discussed widely and will be useful to other Members in the months to come, as the race to entry into force gathers increasing momentum.

Fish Week 4

- Coming back to our work this week, I very much agree with Ambassador Gunnarsson that the last Fish Week was a great start, and now is the right time to deepen the discussions and identify elements and approaches for the starting point of text-based negotiations in the fall.
- I encourage all Members to continue your constructive engagement as we work toward finding common ground on the outstanding issues.
- Thank you, Ambassador Gunnarsson.