12 June 2026

TRADE POLICY REVIEW OF URUGUAY
10 AND 12 JUNE 2026

Concluding Remarks by the Chairperson,
Ambassador H.E. Mr Erwin BOLLINGER

(Permanent Representative of Switzerland)

1. Uruguay's sixth Trade Policy Review has offered a valuable occasion to engage closely with Uruguay, deepening our understanding of the progress and the challenges encountered since its previous Review in 2018. I would like to thank Vice-Minister of External Relations, H.E. Ms Csukasi and the rest of the delegation for their hard work and dedicated engagement in the review process. Let me also thank our discussant, Ambassador James Baxter from Australia, for his thoughtful remarks which enriched our dialogue.

2. Members commended Uruguay for its sustained macroeconomic stability and strong institutions, which supported recovery efforts and strengthened resilience in the aftermath of the pandemic and extreme climate events experienced during the review period. They also noted Uruguay's strong social outcomes, including relatively low poverty and inequality. In addition, Uruguay's efforts to advance women's economic empowerment were highly appreciated. While noting Uruguay's significant progress, Members encouraged Uruguay to continue addressing structural challenges such as labour market rigidities and productivity constraints, as well as promoting competition. This would further contribute to sustaining robust, resilient, and inclusive growth.

3. Members praised Uruguay's continuous efforts to integrate into the global trading system through both multilateral and regional frameworks. They noted that during the review period trade continued to play a central role in Uruguay's development with the combined values of exports and imports of goods and services rising from 47.8% of GDP in 2018 to 52.6% in 2024. Members welcomed Uruguay's success in promoting innovation and diversification, particularly through the expansion of trade in digitally delivered services which emerged as a key area of growth and represent an important step in diversifying the economic base and strengthening its integration into global value chains. As such, they encouraged Uruguay to join the Interim Agreement on Electronic Commerce to support digitally enabled sectors and diversification.

4. At the same time, Members highlighted Uruguay's strong reliance on agricultural exports, which remain the backbone of the merchandise exports and increases its vulnerability to climate events, recalling in particular the historic multi-year drought that adversely affected Uruguay's agriculture output. In this regard, they sought further clarification on the assistance to the sector and invited Uruguay to keep its notification record on domestic support up to date. They took note of Uruguay's commitment to advance its transition to low carbon emissions, mentioning Uruguay's success in generating nearly 100% of its electricity from renewable energies. In this regard, Members also mentioned that Uruguay had become a net exporter of electricity.

5. Members noted that Uruguay's participation in MERCOSUR was a key determinant of its trade policies and trading relationships. Many Members welcomed Uruguay's accession process to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). Given this context, Members also applauded Uruguay's long-standing commitment to the multilateral trading system. They also appreciated Uruguay's active engagement in WTO reform and proactive participation in advancing negotiations in key areas, in particular agriculture. As a founding member of the Cairns Group, Uruguay supported efforts to remove trade-distorting domestic measures and improve market access. Members also valued its participation in the Trade and Environmental Sustainability Structured Discussion and dialogue on plastic trade, which demonstrates Uruguay's commitment to sustainable resource management. In this regard, Members welcomed Uruguay's acceptance of the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies. Members referred to Uruguay's strong record of notifications and invited it to submit those that are pending.

6. Members appreciated Uruguay's commitment to maintaining an open trade regime. They noted that Uruguay's simple average MFN applied tariff declined from 9.4% in 2017 to 8.2% in 2025. On trade facilitation measures, Members acknowledged the continued implementation of trade facilitation measures. Nonetheless, concerns were expressed regarding measures such as the

compulsory use of customs broker, and the consular and port fees charged. Members urged Uruguay to review these measures with a view to reducing costs. Members also acknowledged that Uruguay had applied few non-tariff barriers during the review period.

7. Members encouraged Uruguay to preserve an open and predictable investment regime. However, they noted that state-owned enterprises were still major players in the economy and competition remained limited. Therefore, Members welcomed Uruguay's attempts to improve its competition regime to promote market efficiency. They also urged Uruguay to ensure competitive neutrality. Members invited Uruguay to review its government procurement regime and consider removing preferential margins, market reserves, and local-content requirement. In this context, they expressed their support for Uruguay's intention to accede to the GPA as an observer.

8. Uruguay was commended for improving the intellectual property regime. In particular, Members welcomed the extension in the term of protection for copyright and the entry into force of several IP Treaties. However, challenges remain in addressing counterfeiting and piracy. In this context, Members welcomed Uruguay's introduction of a new notice and blocking mechanism to combat signal piracy.

9. I am pleased to note that 30 delegations actively contributed to the discussion during this Review meeting which shows the importance that Members' attach to understanding Uruguay's trade and trade-related policies. Uruguay has provided answers to almost all advance written questions. Members look forward to receiving replies to any outstanding questions that emerged during the meeting, within one month.

10. In closing, I would like to thank Uruguay for its active engagement in this Review, and all delegations for their contributions to its success.