

**Extraordinary G20 Trade & Investment Ministers Virtual Meeting on COVID-19
held on 30 March 2020**

Information note from the Commission services

On 30 March 2020, Commissioner Hogan participated at the Extraordinary G20 Trade & Investment Ministers Virtual Meeting on COVID-19, representing the EU. As a follow-up to the Extraordinary G20 Summit held on 26 March, the meeting was the start of a G20 process aimed at advancing the dialogue towards coordinated measures and responses to the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on international trade and investment.

In his [intervention](#), Commissioner Hogan, echoed by the Trade Ministers from France, Germany, Italy and Spain, brought to the table seven G20 trade-related actions proposed by the EU to help tackle the immediate crisis:

1. Building on the tariff relief introduced by several G20 members, eliminate all tariffs on COVID-19 related products.
2. Remove, in line with WTO rules, all restrictive measures on imports introduced before the pandemic, notably on the tariff side, and a moratorium on new unilateral tariffs.
3. Ensure that any necessary export restrictions on critical medical supplies are not only targeted, proportionate, transparent, and time-limited (as agreed by Leaders) but are also implemented upholding the principle of international solidarity, considering the evolving needs of other countries for emergency supplies and humanitarian assistance.
4. Refrain from introducing export restrictions or other trade distortive measures on the agri-food sector, where there simply is not a situation of global supply shortage at this juncture.
5. Encourage all manufacturers to increase capacity for producing equipment to fight COVID19, by making standards for medical supplies freely available to any interested company
6. Ensure that “green lanes” are open for the transport and customs controls of essential goods
7. Monitor closely the conditions for the financing of trade, given deteriorating financial and credit conditions

In the discussion, the EU and others highlighted the role of trade policy in the medium to long term for the economic recovery after the crisis, while some members only focused on the short-term response to the sanitary crisis. In this respect, the EU highlighted *inter alia* the importance of a level playing field for trade and investment, WTO and its reform, international rules on digital trade and the removal of unjustified barriers for the supply of transport services.

Trade and Investment Ministers adopted a [statement](#), which should be seen as a starting point rather than the finish line regarding the trade policy response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Ministers have mandated the G20 Trade and Investment Working Group to identify additional proposed actions and the G20 Presidency has envisaged that Trade Ministers may meet again in 4 to 6 weeks' time.

The ministerial statement provides some further elaboration on the trade section of the [Declaration agreed by Leaders on Thursday 26 March](#). The main top-up is a commitment to transparency on emergency measures taken by members, with a central role been given to the WTO in this respect. The EU also succeeded in getting G20 language that promotes trade facilitation for essential goods and international solidarity in the implementation of emergency measures.

Many G20 Members echoed the EU regarding the inclusion of an “import side” dimension in the G20 response, in particular on tariff relief for COVID-19 related products, as well as on the rollback of tariffs and trade restrictions introduced before the pandemic and on a moratorium on new unilateral tariffs. However, a consensus could not be achieved. Further G20 work on these actions will have to be pursued in the G20 Trade and Investment Working Group.