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Governments Must Act Now To Launch Plurilateral Negotiations On Services

Washington, DC: Business organizations comprising the Global Services Coalition (GSC) met together the day after the 4th Global Services Summit in Washington, DC to discuss the WTO and a concerted business action agenda to support international trade negotiations on services. The business groups agreed it is vitally important that Governments commit promptly to the formal launching in Geneva of plurilateral services negotiations.

The industry meeting was co-chaired by Peter Allgeier, President of the Coalition of Service Industries of the United States, and John Cooke, Chair of TheCityUK's Liberalisation of Trade in Services Committee. Peter Allgeier commented: "Governments have been meeting in Geneva and talking about a plurilateral approach to services negotiations for 8 months; business now wants to see Governments shift gear and begin the substantive negotiations by the end of the year."

Co-Chair, John Cooke said, "There is strong momentum for the plurilateral approach. It is for Governments to agree the details of the framework. But they need to know that business prefers use of the most ambitious instruments and that we all agree that the negotiations must be launched and indeed concluded quickly - and with as many participants as possible. We urge a high level of negotiating ambition, in both depth of services trade reform and breadth of coverage; business needs outcomes that make a practical difference to enhancing trade in services."