



Global Services Coalition Flags Need for Policies to Support Services and Digital Trade, Including in Post-Pandemic Recovery

September 28, 2021 - A delegation of Global Services Coalition (GSC) members attending the WTO Public Forum in Geneva this week will have its eye firmly on the prospects for the WTO Ministerial Conference later this year. Delegation members will underscore the GSC's strong support for concrete deliverables in the JSI E-Commerce negotiations; an extension of the WTO E-Commerce moratorium; adoption of the JSI text on Services Domestic Regulation; and an acknowledgement in the upcoming WTO Ministerial statement of the need to create momentum in services market access liberalization.

GSC members will also stress the importance of including services in any new ministerial initiative on post-pandemic recovery and addressing public health concerns.

"Director General Okonjo-Iweala is to be commended for her leadership in efforts to produce a successful MC12 and in overall efforts to strengthen the WTO," said Christine Bliss, President of the U.S. Coalition of Services Industries and a member of the GSC. "The GSC hopes the Director General will give services and digital trade a high priority in pressing for concrete Ministerial deliverables."

European Services Forum Chairman and GSC member Noel Clehane added, “The progress we are seeking in e-commerce and the extension of the moratorium is critically important for SMEs – particularly in developing countries, where restrictions on data flows and duties on e-commerce can hurt their prospects for growth and access to the latest services and technologies. This is essential in addressing pandemic concerns where access to essential goods and services is vital.”

Nicola Watkinson, Managing Director of International Trade and Investment at TheCityUK and a GSC member, said, “The global rules-based system is central to the liberalisation of trade in services. The system faces many challenges. The services sector worldwide looks to Ministers at MC12 to reinforce the WTO’s mission.”

GSC members will host panels on services domestic regulation, the role of services in post-pandemic recovery and services and innovation, as well as participate in sessions across a wide variety of other topics. Members of the delegation will also meet with key WTO delegations to discuss GSC priorities.

About the Global Services Coalition: The Global Services Coalition is an international network of associations representing the services sectors across Asia-Pacific, Europe, North America and South America. The GSC promotes policies worldwide to foster the growth of global services and digital trade.