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**Committee on Agriculture
Special Session**

**STATEMENT BY AMB. VANGELIS VITALIS TO THE
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE IN SPECIAL SESSION**

16 November 2016

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. This is the fourth meeting of the Committee on Agriculture in Special Session (CoA-SS) in our post-Nairobi MC10 Geneva process. As ever, our meeting has three inter-related objectives:

- 1) For me to report back to you on what I have heard so far from the consultations I have been engaged in since our last meeting on 18 July;
- 2) For you to engage with one another on the issues we need to address, as well as to reflect further on the options which various Members have identified for the way ahead and any additional options which may emerge, and
- 3) For us to continue our process of "defining by doing" – including specifically what is practical and plausible for this negotiation.

1.2. The agenda circulated on 13 October to all Members ahead of this meeting will frame our engagement today.

1.3. Against that background and as is my usual practice, I will provide my report on my consultations to date, with reference to: *context*, and *substance*. Finally, I will outline my proposed way forward in *process* terms.

2 CONTEXT

2.1. For transparency, let me record that my report back to you today is based on 67 bilateral consultations undertaken since the summer break. This was supplemented by meetings with several Groups¹ that were able to see me, as well as a meeting on 9 November to which I invited all Group Coordinators.

2.2. As ever, these consultations – both bilaterally, with Groups and in the Group Coordinator format – have been invaluable to me in preparing for this meeting and for focusing my thinking on the issues we need to tackle collectively.

2.3. I have been particularly encouraged that broad agreement – if not necessarily consensus – continues for a set of *shared objectives for our negotiations*, including that:

- 1) Agriculture should form part of any outcome at MC11;
- 2) Ministerial expectations should be delivered upon, including as set out in the relevant Nairobi Ministerial Decisions, the Nairobi Ministerial Declaration, as well as Article 20 of the Agreement on Agriculture;

¹ Requests for meetings were made to all Groups working on agriculture and meetings took place with the Cairns Group, the G10 and the Article XII Members.

- 3) An outcome at MC11 on agriculture is difficult to envisage without progress across the Doha agriculture issues, as well as in other areas of the wider (i.e. non-agriculture) negotiations, including in NAMA, services, Rules, Development and on "new issues". It is acknowledged, however, that these other non-agriculture areas may move at different speeds and deliver different types of outcomes both in scope and ambition, and
- 4) Members continue to seek to avoid polarising debates in CoA-SS and understand that any such polarization risks paralysis, not simply in agriculture, but more generally.

2.4. Since our meetings in Nairobi I identified seven contextual components for these negotiations that Members referenced during my consultations. These remain very much part of your thinking, including: *the Impact of Rising Trade Protection*²; *the Rise of Preferential Trade Agreements*; *how we can achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals*; *the role of two-yearly Ministerial meetings*; *the known-unknowns*; *implications for domestic policy reform*, and *supporting the multilateral trading system*.

2.5. In my latest round of consultations, however, five very specific contextual elements – two of which are new – appear to be at the forefront of Members' thinking:

- 1) **Engagement of Ministers:** Since our last meeting, Norway's Minister of Foreign Affairs convened an informal meeting of a group of Ministers in Oslo on 21-22 October. The purpose of the meeting was for Ministers to discuss a range of issues related to the wider negotiations, including agriculture. The Chair's Summary of Discussion Note, issued under his own authority, reports that:

"Ministers were in general agreement that further work in the lead-up to MC11 with development at its centre would include elements of domestic support in agriculture based on updated notifications, the mandated permanent solution for public stockholding for food security purposes; other mandated tasks from Nairobi".³

The sub-set of Ministers in Oslo were also clear about their expectation that outcomes "should be achieved through incremental steps rather than major leaps, at least in the short term". Ministers recalled the agreement at Nairobi that all Doha issues remain on the table, Minister pointed to well-known topics that probably need more time before results may be harvested. They include: continued reform in agriculture; market access in NAMA; agriculture, and services...". Ministers also made it clear that they expect to continue to be directly involved in the negotiations, including through the expected mini-Ministerial in Davos, Paris and potentially an additional meeting in September 2017 ahead of the full Ministerial meeting in Buenos Aires. I believe this level of Ministerial engagement and interaction is very important, particularly for agriculture where many of the issues we are dealing with have a significant political economy aspect to them. Finally, allow me to also record that Argentina, our hosts for MC11, had two Ministers in Oslo. These Ministers made it clear that "it would be impossible to be in Buenos Aires and not have an outcome on agriculture".

- 2) **Greater Engagement of private sector stakeholders:** I am pleased to report that there has been a sharp rise in the interest of stakeholders in our negotiations. To this end I have met several non-governmental groups working on agriculture, including the World Farmers' Organisation, the International Dairy Federation, the Cairns Group Farm Leaders as well as many Members' own individual agricultural stakeholder groupings and farmer representative organisations. These meetings have been extremely valuable to me and I continue to welcome such approaches and expressions of interest. This level of interest is in sharp contrast to the situation ahead of the Nairobi Ministerial last year. This suggests to me that we may have begun the process of re-energizing agricultural stakeholders to believe that the WTO still matters to them. Many of those I have met with, for instance, warmly commended the outcomes from Nairobi, noting the positive impact this will have

² See in particular the detailed report available at https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news16_e/trdev_09nov16_e.htm.

³ The Summary of Discussion Note provided by Norway's Minister of Foreign Affairs is available at: https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news16_e/dqra_21oct16_e.htm.

on price and certainty. In this regard, I have also appreciated the various commitments⁴ and enhanced coherence between stakeholders. Most recently, the Food and Agriculture Organisation and the International Dairy Federation, for instance, have agreed to work together to contribute to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.⁵ I was also pleased to be invited to provide an update on our negotiations for the International Dairy Federation at their annual conference and most recently to Cairns Group Farm Leaders.

- 3) **The Known-unknowns:** Previously I have recalled that Members have been reflecting on the likely impact on our negotiations of the recent referendum result in the United Kingdom. To this I would now add the recent election results in the United States. In addition, many Members are also considering the potential effect of the launch of a Dispute Settlement case by one Member on a specific aspect of another Member's agricultural domestic support. Members have also been thinking about the implications for our negotiations of the ratification processes related to two significant preferential trade agreements – the Canada-EU Trade Agreement and the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement.
- 4) **UN Sustainable Development Goals:** I have been pleased to see that increasing numbers of Members have been expressing an interest in how to ensure that the WTO negotiations in agriculture can contribute to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs). These Leader-level objectives contain several commitments directly relevant to our negotiations. Many of you have expressed concern, for instance, that in the absence of progress it will be difficult to achieve Goal 2 which emphasises the need to "correct and prevent trade restrictions and distortions in world agricultural markets".⁶ As I continue to remind Members, you have already delivered one specific sub-component of the Goal 2 target – that which relates to the elimination of agricultural export subsidies. We now need to deliver on the remainder.
- 5) **The inter-face between the CoA-SS negotiations and domestic policy considerations:** Many Members have underlined to me the emphasis they place on active and dynamic engagement at the CoA-SS as a signalling mechanism for their intent to deliver outcomes at MC11 in Buenos Aires. They expect that this will inform Members' thinking on their domestic policy settings, including their future domestic agricultural policy settings.

3 SUBSTANCE

3.1. At our 18 July meeting, again at the Heads of Delegations' meeting on 25 July and the subsequent General Council meeting, I made it clear that it was my assessment that Members are moving from reflection to action in these negotiations. I also reported that we are at an important inflection point.

3.2. My latest round of consultations ahead of this meeting has reaffirmed that assessment – it is one that was reinforced by a sub-set of Ministers at the Oslo Informal mini-Ministerial on 21-22 October.

3.3. Before I turn to the substance of our negotiations, let me remind Members that, as mandated by our Ministers in Nairobi, negotiations on Public Stockholding (PSH) and the Special Safeguard Mechanism (SSM) will take place in dedicated sessions of the CoA-SS. This week we will therefore take up Public Stockholding for Food Security Purposes and the Special Safeguard Mechanism on 17 November. You will also have noted that the sixth Dedicated Discussion of the trade-aspects of cotton will take place on 23 November.

⁴ See in particular <http://www.dairydeclaration.org/>.

⁵ See for instance http://mobile.dairyreporter.com/Manufacturers/IDF-and-FAO-sign-Dairy-Declaration-of-Rotterdam-at-summit?utm_source=newsletter_daily&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=20-Oct-2016&c=BydH89pJr2khDJbYWhVTqvXTnqVcxma6&p2.

⁶ See in particular: <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/hunger/>.

3.4. Let me now provide a brief overview about what I am hearing from Members regarding the issues identified in paragraph 31 of the Nairobi Declaration, i.e. domestic support, market access and export competition, as well as other issues that have arisen in the course of my bilateral and Group consultations.

3.5. There are five interrelated aspects to this: Domestic Support and Cotton; Notifications; Market Access; Export Competition; Other issues, including Export Restrictions, and SPS.

3.1 Domestic Support and Cotton

3.6. An outcome on Domestic Support in general and Cotton in particular continues to be regarded by the overwhelming majority of Members as a priority for Buenos Aires. I have detected no change in the determination or intensity of interest in this part of the negotiations. If anything, I have been struck by the increased level of coordinated and coherent messaging to me during my consultations and more generally from almost all major Groupings involved in this aspect of the negotiation, particularly the LDC Group, the ACP Group, the African Group, the CAIRNS Group and the C4 Group. All of these Groups were represented in Oslo and I have met with them or their coordinators in preparing for this meeting. Their collective message on domestic support and cotton was that this was a priority for Buenos Aires, not least because of, as one Minister put it, "the development and poverty alleviation potential".

3.7. I note also that with regard to Cotton, the Cotton Four have met at Ministerial-level in Bamako and issued an important Declaration – which I understand will be circulated shortly to Members, and which among other things: (i) seeks the implementation of the MC10 decision on cotton, including for export subsidies and market access; (ii) calls on WTO Members to work on the elimination of Domestic Support for cotton; (iii) urges Members to keep in mind the specific needs of LDCs, and (iv) encourages development partners to assist cotton sector reform and export efforts of the C4.⁷ The Director-General's recent speeches and statements during that Bamako C4 Ministerial underline his continued commitment on this matter and it is clear that many Members support his call for an outcome in this area.⁸ In this regard, I should also record that several Ministers at the Oslo Ministerial meetings who do not have an obvious commercial interest in cotton, made it clear that it was difficult to imagine an outcome on domestic support in the absence of an outcome in cotton.

3.8. In terms of the substance, a feature of this latest round of consultations has been that Members are engaging with me on a level of detail that had been absent hitherto. This has included several Members and most Groups identifying what they can and cannot work with, while also signalling their expectation of further specific proposals, particularly on domestic support, but also on cotton. This has been usefully informed by the questions that we used to frame the July set of meetings, as well as the responses Members provided to those questions.

3.9. As an objective fact this is a shift in gear when compared to the situation that I reported on at our meeting in May this year. In particular, it is an intensification of the process I undertook ahead of our meeting in July. This has translated in concrete terms in to the new submissions received in advance of our meeting today, i.e. that from Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay (JOB/AG/72/Add.1) and that from Argentina, Australia, Colombia, New Zealand, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Viet Nam (JOB/AG/83 and Corr.1) and from the ACP Group on the ACP Position on Elements for Concrete Negotiations on Agriculture Domestic Support for Development Outcomes in the World Trade Organization (JOB/AG/87).

3.10. I continue to assess that the significant number of questions and submissions Members have circulated over the past six months underlines the commitment of all Members to engage with one another on domestic support and, more particularly on what may be do able for the meetings in Buenos Aires.

⁷ The Bamako Declaration will be made available shortly.

⁸ The WTO Director-General's remarks on cotton in Bamako are available at: https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/spra_e/spra143_e.htm.

3.11. As I reported to the HODs⁹ before the summer break, the question before us, however, remains as challenging as ever.

3.12. There are two aspects to the challenge we confront: (i) it is clear that notwithstanding the overwhelming majority of Members in favour of an outcome on domestic support, several important Members who need to be involved in any outcome are signalling difficulties in this regard, and (ii) we remain some way away from knowing what the content or contours of the domestic support content of the MC11 package should be.

3.13. Notwithstanding these difficulties, a number of intriguing and in some cases new approaches have been proposed. These have included suggestions of imposing new "ceilings" on trade-distorting support – whether through a new broad limit or by using the existing elements and disciplines contained in the Agreement on Agriculture.

3.14. There have also been what I am describing as old "new" elements (such as product-specific disciplines). There are also some genuinely new "new" elements, such as disciplines linked to exports and in my bilateral consultations I have heard other interesting approaches, including, for instance, expanding *de minimis* levels for all Members and rolling AMS into that.

3.15. That said, clear doubts have been raised by some Members about the feasibility of many of these approaches.

3.16. On the one hand, levelling the playing field remains critically important for many, but we are some distance from knowing how to do this. Some Members have reminded me that, from their perspective, the focus of the negotiations should be on Aggregate Measures of Support (AMS) in the first instance. This would, in their view help to "level the playing field". Other Members take a more expansive view, but it is clear that this is a clear fault line in our negotiations.

3.17. As in the past, many groups – such as the LDC and ACP groupings – are concerned about the impact of domestic support on the specific products of interest to them, as well as their own domestic markets in terms of price volatility, import surges, rural livelihoods and so on.

3.18. Article XII Members continue to seek recognition for the efforts made during their accession to the WTO, though their approaches may differ on what precisely this means and a one-size-fits-all solution may not necessarily reflect current realities.

3.19. Another group of Members has substantive defensive concerns about some of the elements being canvassed. They maintain that some approaches risk neglecting the importance of, *inter alia*, proportionality.

3.20. Some Members – regardless of their position on domestic support, or on agriculture more generally – have argued that there needs to be a better balance both within the agriculture negotiations, as well as more broadly including in NAMA, services, Rules and new issues. They do not yet believe that this is the case and this is informing some Members' approaches.

3.21. And, needless to say, Special and Differential Treatment remains of crucial importance.

3.2 Notifications

3.22. I am disappointed that I need to raise the issue of Domestic Support notifications again. It is clear that we continue to lack critical information about what precisely many Members are doing to support their farmers.

3.23. Those of you with whom I met bilaterally will be aware of my concern about this situation. I have been very direct with Members during my bilateral consultations and I have been similarly frank in my meetings with Groups. It is only fair that I do the same now.

⁹ See in particular, JOB/AG/81 of 25 July 2016.

3.24. It is difficult to know what one can say when, in an organization of 164 Members only 27 have submitted data covering the period to the year 2015. Only two of these are developed Members. Put another way that means that 106 Members (EU counted as one) are falling short of their notification commitments.

3.25. If we take a more generous interpretation of the notification deadline, 36 Members plus four recently acceded Members can be considered up to date in their notifications to 2014. Of these only four are developed Members – Australia, New Zealand, Norway and the Russian Federation.

3.26. The remaining Members which are up-to-date are developing Members, including several least developed Members. Of these and in the context of our negotiations, only Brazil and Argentina are major agricultural exporters.

3.27. Put another way, this still means that 97 Members (EU counted as one) – the majority in this organization are out of date in their notifications.

3.28. Furthermore, Members will be as concerned as I was to learn that fully 29 Members have never submitted a domestic support notification. A further ten Members have not submitted notifications for the past 15 years (i.e. since 2002). This means that just under a quarter of the WTO's Membership has either not troubled itself to submit a notification in the past 15 years, or worst still, has not ever bothered to make a notification.

3.29. In terms of those Members which are either major agricultural exporters or significant agricultural importers, or both, there are some nuances, but the fact remains they are all out of date in their notifications. To be clear, two of these have only provided notifications to 2013; and notifications from the other two Members date back to 2010, though one of those includes partial information for 2011.

3.30. Let me restate the obvious, this situation is simply not good enough. I welcome the fact that this is a matter that has also been raised in the Committee on Agriculture where the lack of up-to-date notifications presents a problem as well.

3.31. Put simply, the challenge we face in the negotiations is that we risk negotiating either in the dark, or at best in the dusk. That means there is a risk of error – an error that might benefit some and punish others. That clearly is an undesirable situation that none of us will want to risk.

3.32. As I have done before both in bilateral and Group discussions, I strongly encourage Members therefore to engage their capitals to rectify the parlous state of their notifications and to do so as a matter of urgency.

3.33. The Secretariat is here to assist you if you have any questions about this.

3.34. I should also report that several Members have raised with me the possibility that there should be incentives and perhaps consequences for those Members who are out-of-date in their notifications. Those Members have offered various suggestions, including a certain grace period and reflecting further on approaches taken to those Members in financial arrears.

3.3 Market Access

3.35. My consultations ahead of the May and July meetings suggested that negotiations on *market access* remain a priority for many Members. I also reported that some of you have raised with me and with other Members specific issues of interest to you.

3.36. During the consultations since July, and particularly since the Oslo WTO mini-Ministerial, there has been a noticeable shift on this part of our negotiations. To be precise, there has been an intensification and expansion of interest in the negotiations on agricultural market access. More Members than ever before have raised the issue of market access with me bilaterally. Several Members have indicated that movement on market access may help them to encourage movement at home on domestic support.

3.37. I do not want to overstate the situation – the number of Members with an interest in market access is not comparable to the number with an interest in outcomes on Domestic Support. Equally, however, this round of consultations has revealed a larger group of Members than before, certainly since the Nairobi Ministerial meeting, with an interest in this part of our negotiations.

3.38. In fact, several Members made it clear that they are working on specific elements and issues related to market access and they expect to elaborate on their thinking in the coming months, including initially during our meeting today.

3.39. Those Members expressing an interest in market access have identified topics such as: escalation, simplification, tariff peaks, tropical products as well as the special safeguard on agriculture. Many Members also continue to encourage the conversion of non-*ad valorem* rates to *ad valorem* rates and binding in any remaining unbound rates.

3.40. Some Members continue to have an interest in both real tariff cuts and to changes to TRQs, including both liberalization of administrative procedures, but also to movement in these TRQs themselves.

3.41. A number of Members have made it clear that if they were to engage on market access, Special Products would need to form part of any tariff reduction negotiation. As a more general observation, I would note that many Members have underlined that notwithstanding the proliferation of Preferential Trade Agreements, levelling the playing field multilaterally remains valuable.

3.42. One idea that has been raised again with me bilaterally is whether there may be value in considering a trade-off between individual levels of ambition in market access and domestic support. Equally, however, other Members have proven somewhat resistant to the idea of such an inter-relationship.

3.43. Taken together, the message I want to leave you with is that, while this issue is not as high a priority as domestic support – on which there remains strong agreement about the need for an outcome, if not consensus – market access is now of interest to rather more Members than was the case ahead of and during the July CoA-SS meeting.

3.44. And I welcome in this regard the contributions from Paraguay, Argentina, Australia, Colombia, Peru, Uruguay and Viet Nam (JOB/AG/84 and Corr.1) on Tariff Overhang; from Paraguay, Argentina, Australia, Chile, Colombia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Peru, Uruguay and Viet Nam on the Special Agricultural Safeguard (JOB/AG/85 and Corr.1 and 2); from Uruguay, Argentina, Australia, Colombia, Costa Rica, New Zealand, Paraguay and Peru on Revisiting the most Frequent Problems for Agriculture (JOB/AG/86 and Corr.1), and a Technical Paper on Recent Trends in Agricultural Tropical Products from Costa Rica (RD/AG/54).

3.45. I note also that the Secretariat has updated and revised its 20 December 2004 Note on the Special Agricultural Safeguard (TN/AG/S/29). I have asked the Secretariat to briefly introduce the paper during our meeting.

3.4 Export Competition

3.46. This is perhaps the only part of the negotiation where there has not been a discernible shift in positioning since July, and indeed since the Nairobi Ministerial.

3.47. Continued negotiations on *export competition* are of continuing interest to a small group of Members.

3.48. It is the case, however, that this remains a lower priority item for most Members in terms of paragraph 31 of the Nairobi Ministerial Declaration. In fact, several Members have made it clear during my bilateral consultations that they do not consider export competition to be "unfinished business" as some have suggested. They believe that the negotiations were taken as far as was possible in Nairobi and that this area is a distraction from the other issues, like domestic support and market access on which CoA-SS should be focused.

3.49. As I have said at previous meetings, from my perspective, the situation is clear. Ministers instructed us on this matter: paragraph 31 of the Nairobi Declaration is explicit that negotiations should continue on all three pillars of the agriculture negotiations including export competition. This aspect of our negotiations continues to be a legitimate element in our negotiating agenda. It is, however, for the Membership to determine the direction we should be taking and I encourage those Members with an interest in this aspect of the negotiations to develop proposals for these negotiations.

3.5 Other Issues

3.50. As I have been reporting since the Nairobi Ministerial meetings last year, Members continue to have an interest in what I have been calling "other issues". At this point in our process, these include *export restrictions*, and *SPS* – these two items are referred to most frequently in my consultations.

3.51. In the past, including most recently in July, Members have also raised with me their interest in: private standards for agricultural products; disciplines on subsidies for biofuels, and bio-energy and Geographical Indications. Between July and our current meeting, however, I have heard less about these issues than previously.

3.52. With regard to *export restrictions*, Singapore's set of questions relating to enhancing transparency, including in terms of notifications for export restrictions (JOB/AG/77) continue to attract both attention and interest. Our discussion in July has helped frame the issues we need to consider on this item.

3.53. My bilateral consultations since July on this subject continue to suggest that this is an issue on which there is broad agreement that an outcome may be workable for Buenos Aires, though not yet a consensus.

3.54. While there remains a willingness to consider enhanced transparency and notification commitments by many Members, several continue to express reservations about what they judge to be additional notification commitments. Some Members have also expressed a concern to me that there they believe that this may be "the thin edge of the wedge" and that in fact what is being contemplated is the first phase of a process that will culminate in actual disciplines. This is something that clearly troubles some Members who have made it a specific issue for my bilateral consultations.

3.55. I should also note that in Oslo and during my bilateral consultations, some Members were supportive of an outcome on export restrictions at MC11 as part of a wider package on agriculture. In this regard, they were also clear, however, that they would not support this item if it was likely to be the only outcome from Buenos Aires in agriculture.

4 PROCESS

4.1. This should come as no surprise. My approach on the process for our negotiations continues to be informed by the four inter-related principles I proposed at our last meeting. These are: *Parallelism*; *Without prejudice engagement*; *No presumption*, and *Transparency*.

4.2. Any Member that is unfamiliar with these terms and what I mean by them is invited to seek out my statement to the CoA-SS in May which is available on the WTO website. I intend similarly to make today's statement available on the WTO website shortly.

4.3. Looking ahead, we have our meetings in dedicated Sessions on PSH and SSM.

4.4. Following these meetings I encourage Members to intensify their engagement with one another – bilaterally, and in Groups. There is no substitute for that.

5 CONCLUSION

5.1. In conclusion, I have been encouraged by the engagement we have had during this meeting and therefore the state of our negotiations. The engagement today, particularly on domestic support and market access has underlined my assessment based on my bilateral consultations and meetings with Groups. This is that an overwhelming majority of Members continue to seek an outcome for domestic support for Buenos Aires. What precisely that will look like remains unclear, but the range of submissions and interventions underline that on domestic support there is a lot "on the table". It is for Members to know find ways to engage on the well understood sensitivities – many of which were reiterated today – and to find a way forward. On Market Access too this meeting has demonstrated that there is much greater interest than ever before in this part of the negotiation – a shift in gear. That is to be welcomed, though clearly a great deal still needs to be done to find an outcome that can secure consensus. As with domestic support, however, I am encouraged by the flurry of submissions that will provide a helpful foundation for our ongoing work of "defining by doing".

5.2. Taken together, I have listened carefully to Members, in both the Group meetings I have conducted, as well as during my bilateral consultations and of course during this CoA-SS meeting. It appears to me that we are able to identify a common set of eight guidelines for outcomes at MC11. These include that any outcome in whatever area we can agree on must be:

- 1) Transparent in outcome and in negotiation;
- 2) Development-relevant;
- 3) Clear and simple to understand;
- 4) Practical and do-able;
- 5) Effective;
- 6) Proportionate;
- 7) Evolutionary not revolutionary, i.e. incremental, and
- 8) A stepping stone to further engagement on agricultural reform.

5.3. In the meantime, let me assure you again that I intend to advance our process with all due caution and care through a process of defining by doing. This will continue to be informed by the four principles on process which I enunciated at our last meeting. As ever, be assured that I will undertake this work involving Members and reporting back to you in this format regularly and in a transparent and fair manner.
