



**Committee on Trade and Environment
Special Session**

**REPORT BY THE CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT
IN SPECIAL SESSION**

HIS EXCELLENCY, LEOPOLD ISMAEL SAMBA, AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND
PLENIPOTENTIARY, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

1. As always, there is no further development to note in the context *stricto sensu* of the work of the Special Session of the Committee on Trade and Environment. Having said that, I remain deeply involved in the work of the LDC Group on environmental issues. As Chair of the Committee on Trade and Environment in Special Session, I have witnessed the growing interest of LDCs in recent years in better understanding how trade and trade policy are indispensable tools for tackling the many sustainable development challenges we face.
 2. For example, in June, I chaired a session on trade and environment, climate change and LDC priorities at a brainstorming webinar for LDC ambassadors and experts, at which the importance of the LDC Group's active engagement in WTO discussions on sustainable development, the circular economy and the elimination of plastic pollution was stressed.
 3. I've noted that the negotiations are confronted with diverging views on what environmental goods are and a lack of political will among Members to move the negotiations forward, which would pave the way for joint initiatives held on the side of Committee on Trade and Environment meetings. While some headway has been made in the discussions on the definition of environmental goods, I believe that it is important to meet with all the parties so that we can get to the root causes of the impasse.
 4. Despite the institutional limits of the mandate that was given to us almost 20 years ago in Doha, I remain at the disposal of all delegations to assist in any way I can on this issue.
 5. NEXT STEP: In terms of the activities of the Committee on Trade and Environment in Special Session, I would suggest that, after the summer break, we hold: (1) consultations with Member countries to discuss and exchange views on topics and strategies; and (2) awareness workshops, particularly with LDCs, to explore ways and means to facilitate the participation of all in the WTO's work on trade and environment issues.
 6. I would welcome any new ideas in this regard.
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