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Page: 1/1

General Council

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**SUPPORTING THE CONCLUSION OF FISHERIES SUBSIDIES NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE
SUSTAINABILITY OF THE OCEAN AND FISHING COMMUNITIES**

DRAFT MINISTERIAL DECISION

The following communication, dated 21 December 2020, is being circulated at the request of Brazil to highlight that addressing environmental sustainability concerns must be a vital component in the conclusion of the fisheries subsidies negotiations at the World Trade Organization.

The Ministerial Conference,

Affirming its commitment to a meaningful and ambitious outcome in the negotiations on fisheries subsidies at the World Trade Organization with a view to fulfilling the mandate from Heads of Government in the Sustainable Development Goal 14.6, and the mandate from WTO Ministers, to curb subsidies that threaten global maritime fish stocks;

Recalling that the percentage of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels has significantly dropped over the past three decades and that the efforts made so far by many countries and regions have not been sufficient to reverse the global trend of overfished stocks;

Expressing serious concerns with certain policies and practices of massive subsidization that lead to overcapacity and overfishing and contribute to the depletion of global fish stocks, as well as to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing;

Observing that the most important multilateral negotiation of the WTO today has a sustainability purpose and note that WTO Members have a crucial and historical role to play in securing a robust agreement;

Reaffirming the collective responsibility for the fishing resources and the livelihoods of millions of people around the world who are dependent on capture fisheries;

Reaffirming the importance and urgent need to clarify and improve existing WTO disciplines on fisheries subsidies.

Decides as follows:

1. WTO Members commit to deliver the highest standards of environmental sustainability in reaching a final conclusion of the multilateral agreement on fisheries subsidies, for the benefit of the ocean and our fishing communities.
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