



Statement calling for WTO members to find an interim solution to make progress on current deadlock in Appellate Body

Geneva, 2/12/2019 – Gafta encourages World Trade Organisation (WTO) member governments to find an interim solution to allow the WTO's Appellate body, to continue functioning fully after the 11th December, when only one Appellate Body member will remain.

The WTO Dispute Settlement System is unique among international mechanisms for the resolution of disputes between sovereign states. There is no alternative. Gafta is the international trade association in agricultural commodities, established in 1878. Our members move significant volumes of grains and feeding stuffs from areas of surplus to areas of deficit across the world. Gafta members need international rules and rely on international standards to trade globally.

There has been a resurgence of unilateralism and protectionism over recent years which makes the WTO Dispute Settlement System even more important and valuable than ever before. International trade cannot operate effectively in a system without common rules. Global challenges can only be addressed by global solutions and there is a need for more dialogue and collaboration.

“It is positive to see there is a clear desire to work together and we praise the efforts of many governments who have made proposals to address reform and also those seeking a deeper understanding of current practices, said Jaine Chisholm Caunt, Gafta's Director General.

Gafta calls on governments to use this time to find an interim solution and to include an outline of guidelines to move forward discussions on reform. We believe this will give members time to reflect, and at the same time avoid undermining the essential features of the current system.

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Gafta is the international trade association representing over 1900 member companies in 98 countries who trade in agricultural commodities, spices and general produce. Gafta is headquartered in London and also has offices in Geneva, Kiev, Beijing and Singapore. More than 90% of Gafta's membership is outside the UK. With origins dating back to 1878, Gafta provides a range of important services that facilitate the movement of bulk commodities and other produce around the world.

It is estimated that around 80% of all grain traded internationally is shipped on Gafta standard forms of contract, and Gafta's Arbitration Service, based on English law, is highly respected around the world. Gafta also runs training and education courses, manages Approved Registers for technical trade services and provides trade policy information, and events & networking opportunities for members.

Gafta promotes free trade in agricultural commodities and works with international governments to promote the reduction of tariffs and the removal of non-tariff barriers to trade, as well as a science and evidence-based approach to international trade policy and regulatory decision making.

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