



BACKGROUND BRIEF

23 March 2026

Foreign Affairs Council - Trade

26-29 March 2026, Yaoundé, Cameroon

PRESS

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Chair: Michael Damianos, Minister of Energy, Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Cyprus

Commission representative: Maroš Šefčovič, Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security and
Christophe Hansen, Commissioner for Agriculture and Food

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Main agenda topics:

The Foreign Affairs Council, in its Trade configuration, will be held **in the margins of the 14th Ministerial Conference** (MC14) of the World Trade Organization (WTO). The Council will seek the approval of **two sets of conclusions**, at the start and the end of the MC14, as well as the adoption of a **decision** on the position to be taken on behalf of the EU at the Conference.

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[Meeting page on the Council website](#)

The 14th Ministerial Conference of the WTO

The 14th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC14) will take place from 26 to 29 March 2026 in Yaoundé, Cameroon. Ministers from the 166 WTO member states will gather at MC14 to address the challenges and opportunities within the multilateral trading system, as well as discuss the WTO's future work, including reforms to modernise its architecture and processes. The meeting will be chaired by Luc Magloire Mbarga Atangana, Minister of Trade of Cameroon.

This Ministerial Conference is expected to focus mainly on the reform of the WTO, plurilateral initiatives and approaches, such as the investment facilitation for development and e-commerce agreements, the multilateral moratorium on customs duties on electronic transmissions (e-commerce moratorium), and development, among others.

During the Foreign Affairs Council, in its Trade configuration, EU trade ministers are expected to approve a first set of conclusions at the start of the MC14, outlining the EU's expectations for the MC14.

Once there is sufficient clarity on the outcome of the ministerial conference, ministers will consider the approval of a second set of conclusions. The Council will also aim to adopt a decision on the position to be taken on behalf of the EU at the MC14 to formally endorse the adoption of the legally binding outcomes of the MC14.

Ministers will focus on the EU's key priorities for the MC14, including:

- **WTO reform**, centred on three **pillars, predictability, fairness, and flexibility**, so that the WTO can continue to deliver effectively on its objectives and respond to today's pressing global trade challenges related to industrial policies and level playing field issues, digital trade, climate, biodiversity and resilience, as well as the restoration of a fully functioning dispute settlement system
- the **incorporation of plurilateral agreements** (e-commerce, investment facilitation for development and in the area of trade and the environment) **into the WTO legal framework**
- finding a stable and open-ended **solution for the multilateral e-commerce moratorium** to provide businesses with predictability and stability
- **development and sustainability**, promoting the integration of developing countries into global trade and advancing climate, environmental and sustainable trade initiatives, among others

[14th WTO Ministerial Conference \(official website\)](#)

[EU and the World Trade Organization \(background information\)](#)

[The EU and the WTO \(European Commission\)](#)

[EU submission on WTO reform \(21 January 2026\)](#)

[Foreign Affairs Council \(Trade\) in the margins of WTO MC13 in Abu Dhabi, UAE \(25-29 February 2024\)](#)