Mr. Chair, Mr. Secretary;
Distinguished AMIS delegates;
Ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues;

It's a great pleasure to be able to welcome you back to Geneva and to the WTO – both those of you here in person, and those joining online.

Last year, we were delighted to host the first in-person meeting of the AMIS Global Food Market Information Group since COVID-19 broke out. And we're very pleased to be able to have you here again this year too.

In our own meetings at the WTO, we've noticed the huge difference that results from being able to meet in person again. Doing so really allows people to build and develop relationships with one another - and ultimately deliver concrete outcomes.

I'd particularly like to acknowledge the participation today of Bangladesh, online – which is joining for the first time ever, in a clear sign that more countries are seeing AMIS as an important forum for the achievement of their public policy goals.

For the last twelve years, AMIS has played a crucial role in enhancing transparency on global food markets and strengthening food security.

These are goals which WTO members wholeheartedly support.

In June 2022, trade ministers agreed their first ever WTO declaration on food security, at our twelfth ministerial conference.

This highlights the positive role that AMIS plays. And it emphasises the importance of promptly sharing relevant information about policies that may affect trade and markets for food and agriculture.

Complying with WTO notification commitments is of course important here.
AMIS is also crucial in this regard, complementing our work at the WTO by shining a strong spotlight on wheat, rice, maize, and soybean markets in particular.

The Global Food Market Information Group plays a central role in something else which trade ministers also underscored: the importance of actively participating in mechanisms for information exchange.

The participation of the national focal points we have with us here today shows how determined countries are to put this commitment into practice.

AMIS has helped to improve the functioning of global markets for food and agriculture, by ensuring that accurate, timely information is publicly available on a regular basis.

This has been particularly important when these markets have been buffeted by sudden shocks, as has been the case in recent years:

- the COVID-19 pandemic;
- war and conflicts;
- climate-related shocks and extreme weather events;
- and economic downturns - such as those that followed the 2008 financial crisis.

The monthly AMIS 'Market Monitor' has helped both public and private actors navigate these shocks – and avoid panic-driven responses.

The value of this work has been clear in recent months, as governments have taken steps to lift or to ease the export restrictions that some imposed in the wake of the food price spikes in March 2022.

The WTO is pleased to be able to contribute to these efforts through its ongoing work monitoring current policy developments. And we welcome the opportunity to deepen our engagement with you all in this area.

We're also glad to have joined other AMIS partners - such as the International Grains Council - to work together on projects such as the Wheat Maritime Trade and Food Security dashboard that we launched jointly in May.

As our DG said then, “we need timely data to support timely policy action and rulemaking.”
And the data that's available today contains some reassuring indicators. Despite ongoing geopolitical tensions, recent WTO analysis shows the world is not on the verge of splitting into rival economic blocs.

The tensions we see have sparked some changes in international trading patterns, according to the WTO's *Global Trade Outlook and Statistics* report, which was released last month. But there's limited evidence that globalisation has been thrown into reverse.

That doesn't mean there's any room for complacency about the challenges facing the food and agricultural sector.

With around 9% of the world's population still facing hunger, it's vital we improve how global markets for food and agriculture function.

And climate change is only going to intensify the challenge of doing so.

It's therefore no surprise that improving food security is a major focus of WTO negotiations on food and agriculture, in the run-up to our [13th ministerial conference](#) in February 2024.

So it was encouraging for me to see that Heads of State and Government committed "to keep trade channels and markets open for the movement of food, fertilizers and other agricultural inputs and outputs", in a [declaration](#) on sustainable development they adopted on 18 September at the UN General Assembly.

And it's also great to see the strength and depth of support for AMIS among national governments, as well as from private sector actors.

When G20 leaders met in New Delhi this September, they also issued a [declaration](#) which stated their commitment "to facilitate open, fair, predictable, and rules-based agriculture, food and fertilizer trade".

And they also explicitly committed to supporting AMIS – highlighting its work on fertilizers, its expansion to include vegetable oils, and its enhanced collaboration with early warning systems.

This political support has also translated into concrete financial commitments. Japan in particular has provided AMIS with additional support to help monitor fertilizer markets and logistical constraints – one of the recommendations from our [report](#) to the G20 on food security, produced jointly with FAO and the World Bank in April.
It's great to see so many of these specific topics on the agenda before us today.

I'd like to thank the AMIS Secretariat for having convened such an impressive list of speakers to share their insights on the market and policy context. And my WTO colleagues and I very much look forward to hearing the reflections of national focal points on these same questions.

Among other things, the agenda includes a dedicated session on the topic of export restrictions, which is an area where the WTO is very actively engaged in monitoring policies and advocating for restraint. This topic is also among those that many WTO members would like to see addressed in our ongoing negotiations.

Tomorrow, we'll also have what I believe will be a very useful discussion about AMIS activities and work planning, which should help us all chart the way ahead.

I look forward to the presentations and discussion, and wish you all a very fruitful and productive exchange.

Thank you very much.