



## **World Wine Trade Group Twentieth Year Anniversary Commemoration Statement**

**Neuquén, Argentina, 15 November 2018**

The World Wine Trade Group (WWTG) has become a global leader on issues related to wine trade since its inception in 1998. Over this two-decade period, the WWTG has worked to facilitate international trade in wine, while ensuring regulators can appropriately protect consumers, through information sharing, discussion of regulatory issues in wine markets and joint actions for the removal of trade barriers. Its nine members (Argentina, Australia, Canada, Chile, Georgia, New Zealand, South Africa, the United States and Uruguay) are responsible for approximately 30% of world wine exports, 31% of world wine production and 27% of global wine consumption. Wine exports from WWTG countries accounted for 8.4 billion USD in 2017.

The inter-action between government and industry in the WWTG has contributed to the uniqueness and success of the Group. Through their joint action, the WWTG has made significant achievements that facilitate international trade in wine. These achievements include: the Agreement on Mutual Acceptance of Oenological Practices; the Agreement on Requirements for Wine Labelling and its Protocol; the Memorandum of Understanding on Certification Requirements; and the Arrangement on Information Exchange, Technical Cooperation and Counterfeiting. Coupled with the WWTG's Regulatory Principles that aim to facilitate wine trade for the benefit of both wine exporting and importing countries, these documents are at the core of its activities.

The WWTG advocates for a successful, competitive, and growing global wine industry, operating in international markets; and for the removal of trade distortions and the elimination of unjustified or unnecessary barriers to trade. With this objective, the WWTG recognizes the unique characteristics of each country's regulatory system and advances the mutual acceptance of winemaking practices and harmonization of labelling regulations, rather than the imposition of prescriptive regulatory approaches.

Outreach to non-member wine producing and consuming countries is a key component of the WWTG. The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Wine Regulatory Forum (WRF), a group which seeks to eliminate barriers to trade in wine among APEC economies, has its origins in the WWTG, and the International Wine Technical Summit builds off the WWTG Tbilisi and Cape Town Regulatory Principles. The WWTG's recognition of wine as a microbiological low risk food product has also been accepted by these groups.

The WWTG is reviewing its objectives and activities to ensure that it remains focused on current and anticipated challenges in international wine trade. Governments and industries from wine producing countries interested in attending a future meeting of the WWTG are invited to contact the current Chair at: <http://www.wwtg-gmcv.org>.

Further information on the group can be found at: <https://www.trade.gov/td/ocg/wwtg.htm>