

**Tenth WTO Ministerial Conference
Accession of the Republic of Liberia**

Statement by the Russian Federation

Mr. Chairman,
Mr. Director-General,
Distinguished Ministers,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Russian Federation I would like to express our sincere congratulations to the Republic of Liberia on this historic achievement. After a long and arduous journey that has taken eight years, the Republic of Liberia has reached the final stage of its accession process.

This is positive news for both Liberia and the WTO, as well as for Liberia's bilateral relations with the Russian Federation. During the first ten months of 2015 our mutual trade turnover has increased by 23,3 % compared to the same period of last year. Russia's export to Liberia has grown by 3,7 times and equals to 3,4 million US dollars. We believe that Liberia's accession to the WTO will have a future positive impact on our bilateral relations and will continue to strengthen our economic ties.

For the Republic of Liberia, being part of the multilateral trading system underlines its commitment to transparency, openness and the rule of law. More important, WTO membership becomes an insurance against protectionism, which, in turn, is essential in an uncertain and rapidly changing global political and economic environment.

The accession of Liberia is also beneficial to the WTO, as each accession helps to safeguard and strengthen the multilateral system and takes the WTO closer to its goal of universality.

We are convinced that this accession will provide an example to the other LDCs which are still in the negotiations process, and give a new momentum to their accessions.

The accession of Liberia is a sign of the continued importance of the multilateral trading system. It sends a strong and clear message that the WTO advances with its regular work, including on accessions, and the WTO membership is beneficially enlarged. Indeed, the conclusion of Liberia's accession negotiations is an achievement to all WTO members.

To the Government and people of the Republic of Liberia, I say: Welcome to the WTO.

Thank you.