

**Statement by Senator the Honourable Maxine McClean,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Barbados on  
behalf of the ACP Group of States  
at the Tenth WTO Ministerial Conference**

**Nairobi, Kenya  
16 December, 2015**

Mister Chairman,  
Distinguished Ministers,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am honoured to address you on behalf of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States.

Mister Chairman, I congratulate H. E. Amina Mohamed on her election to the Chair of this Tenth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and applaud the Government and people of Kenya their warm hospitality. I am especially proud that Kenya is a Member of our ACP family.

On this historic occasion, I have been charged with the task of articulating the hopes and aspirations and highlighting the key concerns of the members of the ACP. In doing so it is our expectation that we can

guide the Conference to take decisions that will ultimately address the best interests of all WTO Members.

For this to happen, this Ministerial Conference of the WTO, the first to be held in Africa, must deliver on the development dividend of the Doha Development Round. Outcomes must be based on the proposals of our Members and grounded in the principles and achievements of objectives from the Doha Development Agenda (DDA).

Mister Chairman.

The launch of the DDA fourteen years ago, was a momentous event in this organisation's history, as it was the first time in the celebration of both the GATT and WTO, that a negotiating round was entitled "***a development round***".

Since then, few decisions taken, whether in quantum or substance, have reflected proposals from developing countries, including least developed countries (LDCs) and small vulnerable economies (SVEs). Many of these proposals in their initial form addressed the real needs of

developing countries and were aimed at building our socio-economic development.

At our last session in Bali, the ACP Group demonstrated great leadership and commitment, contributing significantly to the delivery of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA). Our success in Bali has served to heighten our anticipation that efforts to both close the DDA and renege on those issues that constitute the core basis for our membership in the WTO will not materialise.

Notwithstanding our optimism, we are facing at this Ministerial, the absence of a commitment to deliver on the development issues on the table:

- Agriculture
- Services
- Special and Differentiated Treatment, and
- Economically meaningful decisions for LDCs.

I must stress that we however do not believe that the negotiating framework is broken. What is needed is the demonstration of the requisite political will.

In March this year the ACP Group tabled a number of proposals, including a proposal for a development package for Nairobi. We are disappointed that few of our proposals have been considered. Major players have failed to agree on Agriculture and NAMA. We are therefore caught in the crossfire of a thematic battle launched by major players who bear the principal responsibility for the impasses in the negotiations over the last 9 years.

Mister Chairman.

It is against this background that we applaud the WTO as it celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. An anniversary is a time for reflection on achievements and the engagement in an honest assessment. While some of our economies have shown signs of growth over the past two decades, much of our gains have been threatened or lost as we have sought to navigate the recent global economic crisis which started to manifest itself from 2008.

Overall we have suffered high levels of unemployment, budget deficits, and declines in international reserves, further underscoring the

vulnerability of our economies. Unfortunately, in the scheme of global growth and development, the world has not changed for us.

In September, at the United Nations Summit on Sustainable Development, world leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the conclusion of the Doha Round. Ironically we have arrived in Nairobi where there appear to be attempts to cast it aside. Surely, the same Membership that resolved to achieve the first WTO multilaterally agreed accord in Bali, can find ways to surmount differences in Nairobi.

We must chart a course to conclude the remaining core areas of the DDA by our next session. In that process we must also prioritise all of those areas that are of importance to developing countries. We are inter-dependent. The long-term welfare of developing countries is bound up in the conclusion of the development components across all areas of the DDA. These ultimately will benefit all WTO Members.

Mister Chairman.

My country Barbados, is committed to the multilateral trading system which places development at its core. As a small vulnerable economy,

we value highly the recognition by the WTO of the need for flexibilities to be afforded to developing countries, in particular LDCs and SVEs.

Barbados places great store in the Doha Development Agenda, as it recognises that need to narrow inequalities in the share of trade between developed countries and in particular the small and the vulnerable economies.

Barbados pledges its support for the WTO as the premier rule making trade organisation and the only multilateral organisation with the responsibility for global trade governance.

In Paris one short week ago, the world witnessed a historic, successful global agreement on climate change. To quote the Director General of this distinguished organisation, during the opening ceremony, this was “*the power of the world acting as one*”. The WTO has done this before and we can do it again. We look forward to our continued partnerships and experience in “*acting as one*”.

Mister Chairman, I thank you.