

TENTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
WTO, Nairobi, Kenya, 15th – 18th December 2015

CZECH REPUBLIC

Statement by HE Mr Vladimír Bártl
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Madame Chair,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to express our gratitude to the Government and People of Kenya for hosting this important Ministerial Conference in this wonderful country, on the African soil. *Asante sana, Amina Mohamed, asante sana, rafiki wa Kenya!*

We are pleased by the expansion of WTO membership. The Czech Republic cordially welcomes the representatives of the Seychelles, Yemen and Kazakhstan to their first full participation at the Conference. We also greet the accession of Liberia and Afghanistan to our organization.

Increasing Membership is the evidence of the WTO's viability, as well as of continued trust in the multilateral trading system. Moreover, the fact that these new Members are mostly LDCs clearly demonstrates the benefits of rules-based trading system for development.

The Czech Republic would like to endorse the statement made by the European Union. We also believe that a meaningful deal is doable. In agriculture, we have a substantial outcome in the area of Export Competition at hand. Several LDC-specific issues are ripe for harvesting, too. Therefore we must not lose this momentum for delivery in these important areas. Legacy of this Conference should have a longer duration than Roberto Azevedo's drum solo yesterday.

We do realise that the current state of the global economy is challenging in many ways; but it is evident that trade has a potential to help us overcome the downturns of the past and to contribute substantially to the restoration of global growth. We all aim to agree upon the common rules in order to succeed in broadening and distributing welfare. **However, these rules must also reflect the reality of modern**

age. The Czech Republic, as a trade-oriented economy, has come to Nairobi with this sense of urgency, and the world beyond the WTO has similar expectations.

The first 20 years of the WTO existence were marked by successes, as well as failures. Among the achievements the Trade Facilitation Agreement stands out. We hope that its ratification will be finalized shortly. It will enable all WTO Members to enjoy the real benefits the Agreement offers.

This Conference is a particular opportunity for all of us to honestly reflect on our ability to reach compromise. Despite all our efforts, we were unable to bring the long-standing negotiations of the DDA to conclusion. Therefore, we feel a need to change our approach.

This does not mean that individual parts of this agenda are no longer valid. However, we must take into account emerging new trends in global trade associated with value chains. Unless we deal with new topics, such as the development of the digital economy, investment protection and others, within this organisation, a separate spaghetti bowl of different approaches might create unintended obstacles for world trade. We should, therefore, consider reinforcing the rule-making capacity of the WTO.

We might not all agree on everything or be ready for particular negotiations at the same time. Therefore, issue-oriented or plurilateral negotiations anchored to the WTO system may be worth considering. This approach bears fruit. We are close to finalizing the ITA review and believe that negotiations over the Environmental Goods Agreement will continue with the same drive as in the pre-Nairobi period, allowing its conclusion in the near future.

Today, exactly 122 years ago was for the first time performed the famous Antonin Dvorak's New World Symphony; the most audible voice of the symphony is an expression of universal desire for freedom, human solidarity, faith and hope in a new world. Here in Nairobi, we have a future of the world in our hands.

I firmly believe we will use this opportunity to demonstrate the capacity of the WTO and of the Conference itself to deliver.

Thank you for your attention.