

**Statement of Ms Liisa Oviir, Minister of Entrepreneurship, Republic of Estonia**

**At the WTO MC 10, Nairobi, Kenya, 17 December 2015**

Madam Chairperson, Mr Director General, Ministers, dear delegates,

First - Like most of us, who are for the first time here I would like to start with congratulations to the Government and the people of Kenya for hosting this first WTO ministerial on the soil of Africa and thank you wholeheartedly for your great hospitality we have been able to enjoy.

Estonia, as a small country, firmly believes in the strength of a multilateral, ruled based system that sets the boundaries for trade. In the ever-globalising world, we are all increasingly interconnected and need the WTO to lead the global path to economic growth and greater prosperity of all nations.

At this stage when we celebrate the 20th anniversary of our organisation and reflect back we have to be frank and acknowledge that we have not been very successful in coping with the pace of real life. It is especially true when it comes to core business of rule setting and agreeing in the new disciplines like digital trade that are quickly becoming everyday part of our nations and peoples.

Using this occasion we welcome the modernised ITA agreement that surely will provide new opportunities for advancing global trade and digital services. Estonia is already one of the world's most digitally adept societies and a hotbed for software innovation that has hatched companies like Skype or TransferWise.

We need more flexibility, give and take, goodwill from all members to ensure that we will achieve success here in Nairobi. As ministers, we have to show leadership and ingenuity in agreeing in the trade rules, just on the level and in the manner our businesses back home show ingenuity in utilising the new opportunities globalisation has provided.

Doha development agenda and its focus on the special needs of developing countries and especially the LDCs and the success thereof is crucial to ensure that everybody would benefit from trade. We welcome the Trade Facilitation Agreement but we should do more, much more. We have the export competition proposal in front of us that would especially benefit the developing and most vulnerable economies and we do hope we can come to a fair and balanced agreement on this.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In recent years, many of our nations have resorted to regional and megaregional trade agreements. Yes, these bilateral deals do help our businesses to explore new markets thus alleviating their thirst to engage in more and fruitful trade but regional trade agreements provide no systemic substitution to what this organisation should be stand and was created for.

We are all proud of the different functions the WTO plays, including dispute settlement and trade policy review but we also need to make sure the negotiating function of this organisation will be restored and moreover that it will be ambitious and successful. With these words, I wish us all every success here in Nairobi and express my hope we will be able to return home with a message to the world that we have made progress, meaningful progress.

Lastly may I use this opportunity to welcome the news members of this organisation – Liberia, Afghanistan and also Kazakhstan.

Thank you Madam Chairperson.