



**Fijian National Statement for the 10th WTO Ministerial Conference,
the Honourable Minister Faiyaz Koya, Minister for Industry, Trade
and Tourism, delivered on 17 December 2015 at the Kenyatta
International Conference Centre, Nairobi, Kenya.**

Madam Chair,

Allow me to first thank you, and through you all Kenyans, for the warm welcome to this beautiful country. Kenya, with its mountains, and its beaches, feels very much like home.

I am making this statement on behalf of my own country, Fiji, and also the Pacific WTO Members. The Ministers of the Pacific WTO Group have circulated a statement for your consideration underscoring our priorities for this Conference and beyond.

Madam Chair

We had hoped that this would be the Ministerial Conference to deliver on the Doha Development Agenda. After 14 years of negotiations, we had hoped that there would be something to take back to our people in the Pacific to show them as a result of these negotiations, we have tangible benefits for our farmers, our fishermen, and those who are struggling to convert their entrepreneurial potential into economic reality through trade. This hope still burns bright.

We also realise that we need to be realistic. From the 20 broad areas of work, and hundreds of specific issues within those, mandated under the Doha Development Agenda, very few have even been brought to this Ministerial Conference as potential outcomes. Of these, even fewer are of trade and developmental potential for Fiji and the Pacific. I understand that

there has been and continues to be opposition to the improvements to specific agreements on special and differential treatment applying to developing countries other than Least Developed Countries. I understand that a very limited and low ambition goal on disciplining the most egregious forms of fisheries subsidies is facing difficulties. I understand also that the recognition given to Small and Vulnerable Economies thus far in negotiations has been questioned.

These, Madam Chair, are our concerns. These are not the concerns of the major players in the WTO. It is the Small and Vulnerable Economies, including those in the Pacific whose unique needs were highlighted at this year's 5th Global Aid for Trade Review, who are at most risk of being left behind by the multilateral trading system. It is equally important that such economies, like that of Fiji and other Pacific Islands, are the economies that most need the protection of a strong, effective and functioning multilateral trading system. This is particularly so in view of the proliferation of regional trade agreements which exclude us by and large, and wherein the bounds of WTO rules are often exceeded, beyond our capabilities.

Notwithstanding the difficulties that the DDA has faced, Madam Chair, Fiji and the Pacific WTO members are fully committed to the WTO and its negotiating function. Again, notwithstanding the capacity constraints and power differential that the Pacific faces in WTO negotiations and regular work, Fiji and the Pacific WTO Group is firm in its belief that only the WTO can provide a level playing field in decision making for trade rules. In Fiji's case, it is a reflection of this commitment to the WTO that Fiji last year opened in Geneva, after many years of consideration, a fully-fledged Permanent Mission to the WTO.

Madam Chair, we do not trade for the sake of trade itself. Indeed the very first preambular paragraph of the Marrakesh Agreement acknowledges that trade and economic relations should be conducted with a view to raising standards of living, and that positive efforts must be designed to ensure that developing countries secure a share of the growth in international trade commensurate with the needs of their economic development. We must work with these objectives in mind, not just for those who already have the trading might to matter in the world, but for those who have diminishing aspirations at remaining relevant.

Madam Chair, impediments to a development oriented outcome, albeit limited, is not insurmountable, at this historic ministerial meeting, the first in the African continent. In Fiji we are able to achieve great things through

our “bula spirit and smile”, and doing all things the Pacific way. Madam Chair, I am sure if we apply the same spirit, political will and goodwill to our conference, it will be successful and will result in beneficial outcomes to all.

I thank you Chair.