

## DRAFT STATEMENT BY VICE MINISTER CALENDIA

Ministers, Delegates,

The failure of this conference would be a major blow to the international trading system.

An analysis of the context in which this tenth ministerial meeting is taking place should help us to understand deeper and better.

The system of international trade is developing in 3 different levels of negotiations and one overarching pillar represented by the WTO, with its set of negotiating texts, supervising rules and its dispute settlement body.

The WTO is and will remain the cornerstone of global trade.

Under this overarching pillar, the multilateral round plays a fundamental role especially in improving the framework conditions and keeping all countries, particularly LDCs, engaged in the process of internationalization.

The second level is the plurilateral one, which is a powerful tool for connecting, on a sectorial basis, also countries that are not directly engaged in bilateral process.

As far as the third level of negotiations is concerned, we have to recognize that bilateral and regional agreements are the formats where major progress in terms of market access and regulatory convergence occurred and will continue to occur. But we have to keep in mind that - as Amina correctly pointed out yesterday – the World is not limited to likeminded countries.

These 3 levels are not incompatible, on the contrary they can pave the way for a synergic outcome, as we have seen in the MC9 with the Trade Facilitation Agreement.

The Italian Government is a strong supporter of an ambitious trade agenda, multilateral, plurilateral and bilateral.

In order to fulfill such an ambitious agenda, we believe that a great degree of flexibility is needed in the multilateral negotiations.

In particular, this flexibility is of paramount importance for the framework rules of the trading system and the provisions aimed at supporting the Least Developed Countries, such as the trade competition and the LDC package.

From this perspective, if we avoid an ideological battle on the future of the DDA, there is a possible and viable deliverable for this conference.

A balanced package mainly based on export competition and development is within our reach. The real interests, in this case, are objectively not – I repeat NOT – too far apart.

On the contrary, it has to be clear that if we let ideological approaches heavily influencing the agenda, then the whole system is likely to become dangerously unstable, at a time when worrisome elements of geopolitical, economic and financial fragility are already evident.

We all share the idea that the objectives of the DDA are still fundamental for the world and have to be pursued. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that, so far, the ability to deliver has been below expectations.

To pretend to conclude here and now the discussion on a possible alternative agenda would be as useless and harmful as to declare that we can go on as we did in the last fourteen years.

The terms of a reachable deal are therefore rather clear.

The greatest flexibility that the developed countries must demonstrate on the negotiating package must be reciprocated by the highest level of pragmatism of other countries on the perimeter of that package.

As for the DDA, we have to create the conditions to focus our discussions, in the forthcoming months, on how to achieve its objectives rather than fighting on the abstract value of the words that we will put in the final declaration.

Than you.