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**Ministerial Conference
Tenth Session
Nairobi, 15-18 December 2015**

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**REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY HON. UHURU KENYATTA, C.G.H.,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA**

MC10 OPENING SESSION
15 DECEMBER 2015

It is my pleasure and privilege to warmly welcome you to Kenya and to Nairobi.

I know many of you have travelled from afar to attend this important Conference. This is a clear demonstration of the importance you attach to this event.

A very warm welcome to all the Heads of State and Government, as well as Heads and Representatives of multilateral and Civil Society Organizations who have joined us for this auspicious occasion. As we say in this part of the world, **KARIBUNI SANA**.

For those of you visiting Kenya for the first time, take a few days after the Conference and enjoy Kenya's beauty and hospitality.

Let me also take this opportunity to commend Mr. Roberto Azevêdo, the Director-General of the WTO and his able team, for their vital role in the consultations that preceded this conference.

This is the **20th year of the WTO**. We are pleased that you chose to celebrate this **Anniversary in Africa, and in Kenya**.

As we look forward to the next twenty years of our collective effort to build prosperity, we should get encouragement from the achievements of the WTO. Africa, and indeed the whole world, eagerly awaits the completion of a framework for a new order of sustainable development.

That ambition, which once seemed distant, is now within reach given the singular achievements as a multilateral community we have seen this year.

In July 2015, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, we had a successful **Third International Conference for Financing for Development**, arising from the Monterrey Consensus. It was followed by the adoption of the **2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development Goals** in September, in New York, by the world leaders. Subsequently and in the past week, at **COP 21**, in Paris, France, we reached a historic agreement to combat climate change.

Indeed, **year 2015** is a year in which we have displayed unparalleled cooperation in agreeing on a number of collective approaches to some of the most pressing problems facing humanity.

The spirit that has allowed us to come together and achieve measures that many thought impossible should be present at this year's **10th WTO Ministerial Conference**. The hope for millions of people in increased prosperity on the basis of trade and exchange, is in your hands.

The outcome of this meeting will positively touch on many other pressing challenges such as insecurity, instability and inequality. It is, therefore, my earnest encouragement to all negotiating teams represented here today to seize this moment. Reach for mutually beneficial compromise, and allow yourself no result except success.

There is no doubt that the WTO has made major contributions to the growth and stability of the global economy.

It has helped boost international trade, resolved disputes among Members, and supported Developing Countries, in particular the Least Developed Countries, to integrate into the multilateral trading system. The growing Membership of the organization is a strong endorsement of its continuing relevance.

As we celebrate the **20th Anniversary**, we need to reflect on and address the challenges encountered.

This will be critical in ensuring that WTO effectively plays its role of promoting global trade that is supportive of sustainable and shared development across the world by increasing the number of developing countries able to fully reach their potential.

We must remember that globally, the consequences of lack of adequate economic opportunities are a leading driver of the social and political instability, which helps drive extremism and violence.

The deliberations of this Conference, therefore, are important in unlocking the economic potential of many countries, with positive benefits for all of us. It will win millions of supporters for the global order at a time when it is under increased pressure than it has been for decades.

We note that this Conference is taking place at a time when world trade has slowed, and the world economy is experiencing weak growth.

This context suggests that the WTO has an important role in contributing to the recovery of global economy by taking measures that promotes growth of trade.

In this respect, the WTO should continue to assist countries in undertaking domestic structural reforms aimed at **modernization, diversification and improvement of business environments**.

Holding this Ministerial Conference in Africa is a good opportunity to highlight the growth potential of Africa and, indeed, of the Least Developed Countries.

As the continent with the lowest participation in global trade, and the world's youngest and fastest growing populations, the world will change for the better from an Africa that trades more goods and services with more markets.

Africans are showing that they are ready to be part of the **global economic transformation** toward inclusion and sustainability.

Today, Africa is one of the fastest growing regions. In 2014, six of the world's ten fastest growing economies were African.

Africa is now a **"rising and emerging continent"**, with an abundance of opportunities, optimism and dynamism.

In volume terms, Africa's exports of goods grew by 500 percent, between 1995 and 2013, while inward Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) grew from US\$ 9 billion in 2000 to 57.2 billion in 2013, an over 600% increase. In addition, which is encouraging, investments in Africa record higher rates of return than in any other region.

Yet, the Continent is still faced with serious challenges of poverty. African leaders are determined to tackle them, but to succeed we need the goodwill and the support of the rest of the world. A global trade system that allows us to seize opportunities is a **fundamental** part of our drive to solve challenges such as poverty, insecurity, and environmental destruction.

In addition, the global trade system will enable sustained and inclusive economic growth that allows us the means to deliver solutions at the scale they are so urgently required.

For our part as Africans, even as we seek a deeper more beneficial role in the global economy, **boosting regional integration is a priority**. We know that increasing trade between ourselves will boost our economic growth, and create jobs for our youth.

The building blocks for this integration are the regional economic groupings such as the **East African Community**. These blocks will eventually give way to larger groupings such as the African Continental Free Trade Area.

This process is complementary to our engagement with the WTO which supports domestic economic and trade reforms, development of multilateral trade rules, greater market access and investment, regulatory cooperation, and good governance.

The slow progress in concluding the **Doha Round** has given impetus to a multiplicity of mega free trade agreements.

This does not augur well for an open and transparent, all inclusive, and rule based **Multilateral Trading System**.

The WTO Ministerial Conference in Bali, Indonesia, in December 2013 was the first under the Doha Round that succeeded in concluding negotiations in a limited number of areas including the Trade Facilitation Agreement.

The Agreement is a positive contribution that removes unnecessary barriers and harmonizes related standards.

We need to build on it, and agree on **tangible outcomes here in Nairobi** in order to give credibility to the WTO as a rule based organization.

You will find Africa ready to do all we can to ensure the success of this Tenth Ministerial Conference.

Our countries firmly believe in the multilateral trading system's ability to deliver meaningful outcomes for our growth, development and poverty reduction strategies.

We, therefore, must deliver for all, and especially for **Africa** and the **Least Developed Countries**.

The **agriculture negotiations in the Doha Round** are the ones from which developing countries can derive most gains. Agriculture is particularly important for Africa considering that majority of the population depends on it for **food, livelihood, and employment**.

However, distortions in this sector have continued to prevent it from realizing its full potential. Africa's farmers simply cannot compete against heavily subsidized farmers in developed countries.

In this connection, the Doha Round of negotiations in agriculture provides us with the best opportunity to address the distortions and align global trade with our development goals. **I urge all of you to accelerate toward a positive end to our long journey of establishing a fair and market oriented trade in agriculture.**

Finally, let me take this opportunity to thank all the negotiators in Geneva, who have worked hard to get us to this stage. I have been informed that, while divergent positions still persist on several fronts, great effort is being made to reach agreement. I urge you all to exercise flexibility in the spirit of compromise.

I am confident that you will rise to the occasion and demonstrate that this organization can deliver successful outcomes for the global economy and sustainable development. We owe the world and our young people that much. I thank you all.
