

December 2015

10th WTO Ministerial Conference

Plenary session

**Kenyatta International Convention Centre Room Tsavo
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MONTENEGRO

Head of Delegation, Ambassador Zorica Maric-Djordjevic

1. On behalf of the Government of Montenegro, I would first like to warmly thank our hosts, the Government of Kenya, for their hard work in organizing MC10. I would also like to use this opportunity to extend Montenegro's welcome to all new Members of the WTO. Since our last Ministerial Meeting in Bali in December 2013, Yemen, Seychelles, and Kazakhstan have joined the organization, and Liberia's accession package was approved. At this Ministerial, we will also celebrate the approval of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's accession package. And, Montenegro looks forward to also welcoming, as soon as possible, our close regional partners, Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, as full members of the WTO family.

Montenegro believes that these accessions show the continued relevance of the WTO and that each new Member contributes to the strengthening of the multilateral trading system. As of today, 20 years after its creation, the WTO already numbers 162 Members – something of which we can all be proud.

2. Montenegro, itself a relatively recent WTO Member, fulfils its membership commitments and obligations with great seriousness and dedication. We believe in the WTO as the central place for negotiating market opening and trade rules and have been actively involved in the ongoing efforts to design a meaningful and balanced Nairobi package. Montenegro is working hard on and is looking forward to joining the ranks of WTO Members who have formally ratified and accepted the Trade Facilitation Agreement. The entry into force of the TFA will have a great impact on development and economic growth. For small countries like Montenegro, which rely on an open trading system, this agreement is an important engine for economic growth.

3. Apart from implementing its obligations under the core multilateral WTO Agreements, Montenegro is actively engaged in work relating to current and possible future plurilateral Agreements under the WTO umbrella. These Agreements have also delivered positive outcomes for Montenegro and the WTO.

4. Earlier this year, on 15 June, we had a pleasure of handing over to Director-General Azevêdo Montenegro's instrument of accession to the WTO Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA). This followed the successful conclusion of negotiations relating to Montenegro's accession to the GPA in 2014. We hope and believe that our accession to the Agreement will be

taken as a sign of the importance that Montenegro attaches to good governance in the public procurement sector, and of the alignment of our institutions with best practices internationally.

5. Believing in the economic benefits of market liberalization, Montenegro has also participated actively in the negotiations on the expansion of the ITA agreement. We recognize the importance of this Agreement and strive to put our country on the radar as an IT business-friendly and conducive environment. The agreement that we have reached and finalized on the expansion of the ITA here in Nairobi is a major achievement for the participating economies, for the WTO as an organization, and for the multilateral trading system.

6. Finally, the technical assistance provided by the WTO Secretariat has been crucial in supporting Montenegro in its efforts to contribute to this organization as an active and constructive WTO Member. I am, particularly, grateful for the support received from the TFA Facility and the Secretariat's Institute for Training and Technical Cooperation in regard to our future implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement and progressive training to enhance our administrative capacities. Overall, such assistance is crucial to ensuring that Montenegro and other new WTO Members can fully reap the benefits of participating in the WTO through market opening and internal reform.

7. Before closing, I affirm my country's full commitment to the multilateral trading system to continue to advance the liberalization of world trade and strengthen its rule book in ways that are relevant and responsive to the needs of all Members of the Organization, having in mind recent market access commitments. We are open to new ideas and fresh approaches that affirm and respect the centrality of the WTO as the guardian of the system. Montenegro remains committed to contribute constructively to a full success of the Tenth Ministerial conference.

Thank you.

Nairobi, December 17. 2015