

Tenth WTO Ministerial Conference, Nairobi, Kenya,

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Statement by H.E. Dr. Okechukwu E. Enelamah

Honorable Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment

NIGERIA

Let me, on behalf of the Nigerian delegation to the Tenth Ministerial Conference, join other speakers before me to congratulate you Madam Chairperson, on your election as the Chair of the Tenth Ministerial Conference. Please accept the appreciation of the Government of Nigeria for your hard work in the preparatory process for this first WTO Ministerial Conference to be held on African soil.

I also pay special tribute to H.E. Mr. Roberto Azevedo, Director-General of the WTO and, Ambassador Fernando DE MATEO, the Chairman of the General Council. I thank them for their effective leadership role in the Geneva process, as well as for evolving the agenda placed before us for consideration.

The Nigerian delegation has been overwhelmed by the warm hospitality extended to us since our arrival by the Government and people of Kenya. I wish to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to them. Let me also seize this opportunity to give an anticipatory welcome to Liberia and Afghanistan to the WTO family, and trust that their accession would be beneficial to the entire membership.

This Conference is taking place at a critical time for the multilateral trading system and the global economy as a whole. The Tenth WTO Ministerial Meeting provides an important opportunity to address the challenges facing the rules-based trading system. Nigeria believes that this conference provides a unique opportunity for Members to take stock, listen and proffer pragmatic solutions. Our objective is to achieve a successful outcome for the sustainable advancement of a multilateral trading system that is transparent and equitable for all parties.

Nigeria is committed to an industrialized economy, well-integrated into the global market through regional and global value chains.

We are implementing domestic policy reforms as a means of increasing the benefits accruable to us from the Multilateral Trading System. We are striving to improve the ease of doing business and facilitating trade within and across our national borders.

Nigeria appreciates the progress made in the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA), with respect to its ratification by an increasing number of Members. My delegation wishes to assure Members that Nigeria is in the process of finalizing our own ratification. We note the importance of the provision of technical assistance and capacity building to enable developing, and least-developed countries in particular, implement the TFA seamlessly upon its entry into force.

The Agricultural sector is extremely important to Nigeria in terms of exports as well as food security, livelihood concerns and poverty alleviation. Agricultural trade is still in need of fundamental reform with a view to correcting and reducing significant distortions. We emphasize the need for a fair global agricultural trading system. Nigeria supports a meaningful solution to the cotton issue in view

of its importance to the economies of many countries, particularly in Africa.

In conclusion, Nigeria considers this Ministerial Conference to be extremely important. We need to build on the success we achieved in Bali. It will be a difficult task, but not an insurmountable one.

What is required over the next few days for a successful Ministerial Conference is attaining an outcome that is meaningful, fair and balanced. To achieve this here in Nairobi we all need to be flexible and open to innovative and creative solutions that will strengthen the multilateral trading system.

We are, therefore, prepared to engage constructively in the negotiations in a manner that will produce the greatest possible benefit to our nation, Africa and all WTO Members.

Thank you