

Statement by Norway
Børge Brende, Minister of Foreign Affairs
WTO 10th Ministerial Conference (MC10)
Nairobi, 16. December 2015

Madam Chair, Ministers, Excellencies – Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me start by thanking Kenya for hosting this Ministerial.

I would also like to thank the Director General and Members for their work over the last few months.

That we are meeting here is an illustration of the new Africa that is emerging, -- an Africa with high growth rates, an Africa that is increasingly trading more with the rest of the world, and an Africa that is heading towards a brighter, more prosperous tomorrow.

Chair,

The multilateral trading system is a remarkable triumph for international cooperation.

Faced with global challenges such as terrorism, migration and climate change, we need more international cooperation, not less.

For trade - it is only the multilateral trading system and the WTO that can deliver truly global solutions.

Chair,

The integration of developing countries into the trading system, and in particular the least developed among them, is of crucial importance.

I warmly welcome Liberia and Afghanistan as new members.

Today, I presented Norway's instrument of acceptance of the Agreement on Trade Facilitation to the Director General. I urge all member to ratify this agreement.

The expansion of the information technology agreement (if we get there) would demonstrate that members of this organisation are willing and are able to negotiate.

We must keep this in mind – as we have come to Nairobi to finalize a balanced package.

Norway is prepared to put every effort into reaching agreement.

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Despite wide differences, we need to find a way forward together.

Chair,

Norway's main objective at this 20th anniversary of the WTO is to maintain and strengthen the WTO as the global forum for negotiations of trade rules and market access.

The WTO's role as the provider of overarching stable and predictable global trade rules is unchallenged.

Its role as a forum for consultations and dispute settlement is undisputed.

It is the negotiating arm that needs reaffirmation.

This is the task ahead of us in the hours and days ahead.

Let's get to work.
