

STATEMENT
MINISTER FOR COMMERCE, GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN

WTO MINISTERIAL PLENARY SESSION
NAIROBI, 17TH DECEMBER 2015

Excellencies,
Distinguished Colleagues,
Fellow reformers,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

- I express my deepest gratitude to the Government and the people of THE REPUBLIC OF Kenya for their generous, warm hospitality as hosts of this Conference.
- Having started in Africa, WTO has come back to the Continent after twenty years. This is an indication of the positive direction in which Kenya and WTO have advanced. Kenya has demonstrated growth as well as regional leadership, while WTO has highlighted its developmental character by holding its first Ministerial Conference on African soil.
- I also take this opportunity to felicitate and welcome new fellow members: Liberia and our two esteemed neighbours Kazakhstan and Afghanistan.

Excellencies,

- WTO as an institution has exhibited institutional strength to bring nations together in ever-increasing numbers to reform their trade procedures and policies towards transparency and openness; and to resolve their conflicts through a rules-based global trade governance.
- The mechanisms of Trade Policy Review and Dispute Resolution are of immense value and need to be further strengthened, specially Dispute Resolution which is facing long queues.
- Many of my colleagues have cited the Accord on Climate Change and Sustainable Development Goals 2030 as an inspiration for WTO. But we must draw the right lessons from Paris and New York. We must distinguish between the urgent and the important.
- What is important is to prevent retrogressive, Uruguay-minus steps, and work together towards a pro-reform, pro-sustainability and pro-discipline transparent outcomes. The future economic growth and prosperity of all our peoples depends on it.

Excellencies,

- Pakistan reaffirms the need for enhancing trade opportunities coupled with removing capacity constraints faced by developing countries and LDCs so as to facilitate their smooth blending into the Global Value Chains.
- We strongly support the reform agenda being stewarded by Cotton-4. Being the 4th largest producer of cotton in the world without any trade distorting domestic support, we will be delighted to share our technical know how and best practices with our C-4 colleagues.
- We renew our pledge to discipline global trade rules with due deference to prioritizing development objectives. Yet we must do so with the recognition that the economic landscape and trade topography of the world has changed considerably since the turn of the century. Technology has transformed the speed and quality of information flows, and the ways with which we communicate with each other.

Excellencies,

- Pakistan shares with fellow members the disappointment that at WTO we have not been able to achieve convergence despite the low level of ambition on export subsidies on agriculture. We are firm in our view that it is not advisable to

create any linkage between one element of market access pillar with the full pillar of export competition.

- The Public Stockholding proposal in its current form has already had serious and adverse unintended consequences for our economy. We share emphatically the imperative to feed the hungry and assist the vulnerable, but not at the cost of livelihoods of millions of poor, subsistence farmers.
- Future negotiations on the subject must be grounded in verifiable data and evidence, and ensure that public stockholding does not transgress into trade-distorting export subsidies that hurt farmers in other countries.
- Pakistan will support a robust post-Nairobi work program keeping in view all perspectives of food security on the table.

Distinguished Chair and delegates:

- I am delighted to inform this distinguished audience that Pakistan is the first and so far the only country in South Asia to ratify the Trade Facilitation Agreement.
- By facilitating regional and international trade, ratification of TFA by other regional economies will supplement vast connectivity benefits of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.
- Accelerated movement in Central Asia for WTO accession and TFA ratifications will also produce a fresh stimulus

towards achieving Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's vision of shared prosperity through regional economic integration.

- As the first mover in TFA, an ever-more stable, peaceful, democratic, and growing Pakistan is poised to be the economic and trade hub for Central Asia and South Asia, and will open new doors to the rest of the world.
- As Forster wrote, "Only connect the prose and the passion, and both will be exalted. Live in fragments no longer. Only connect."

I THANK YOU CHAIR
