

LITHUANIA

STATEMENT BY MR MR ALBINAS ZANANAVIČIUS VICE-MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA

I would like to start by expressing our gratitude to the government of Argentina for hosting this Ministerial Conference and bringing us all here to witness the dynamics and energy of Buenos Aires: the perfect example of the change and welfare that trade and economic openness can bring to the societies across the globe.

The World Trade Organization has a central role of the driver of growth, economic development and welfare and the forum for the debate of problems all societies are facing. Lithuania as a small and open economy is a strong supporter of stable and efficient international trade system.

We admit that current situation does not allow us to reach as ambitious outcome as many members would wish. Still, we would like to reconfirm that the WTO remains vital for the international trade system as a watchdog for the implementations of multilateral obligations and negotiating platform for modernization and improvement of trade rules.

In this regard I would like to reiterate that reaching even a moderate outcome on Fisheries subsidies would be a huge step forward not only in dealing with overfishing but also proving that the members can agree and the WTO can deal with the most complex and sensitive issues.

There are many global challenges and problems keeping our businesses and individuals from realizing their full potential. That's where the future WTO negotiating agenda needs to be looking at.

Let me name few examples. Digital trade is on the top of new developments in international trade. Trade distortions deriving from provision of horizontal subsidies

is a major concern of many industries. SMEs are essential in economic development so we need to include them into a global trading system.

Having rules-based multilateral trading system benefits each of us. It is a responsibility of all Members to respect and implement WTO agreements. Improvements in transparency and notification requirements are essential in this respect.

Undoubtedly, the binding Dispute Settlement system and independent Appellate Body is a flagship of the organization. While discussing on possible improvements in this area it has to remain fully operational.

Last, but not least, we should reiterate that international trade is an engine for economic development and we should not underestimate the role of the WTO. We should make best efforts to help all Members implement trade rules and to benefit from international trade.

I would like to confirm that Lithuania is committed to multilateral trading system and will be pragmatic, practical and cooperative in finding solutions that work for everyone.