



**STATEMENT BY**

**THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY,  
TRADE AND TOURISM,**

**HONOURABLE HENRY MUSSA, MP**

**AT**

**THE 11<sup>TH</sup> MINISTERIAL  
CONFERENCE,**

**10<sup>TH</sup> TO 13<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2017,**

**BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA.**

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- Chairperson of the WTO Ministerial Conference, H.E Mrs Susan Malcorra,
- Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers,
- Excellencies, the Ambassadors and High Commissioners,
- WTO Director General, Mr. Roberto Azevedo,
- Distinguished delegates,
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

At the onset allow me to join those that have spoken before me in extending my sincere gratitude to the Government and people of Argentina for the warm hospitality accorded to me and my delegation since our arrival

here in Buenos Aires. Let me also express our gratitude to the WTO Secretariat for facilitating our participation in the MC11 and more importantly for the candid manner in which the Director General and his staff have organised this Ministerial Conference.

**Chairperson,**

**Colleagues,**

Almost 16 years ago, Doha generated high hopes and enthusiasm to all of us. A hope of sustainable economic growth and prosperity among millions of people. These hopes should not fade away. This is why our mandate was and still is to address the development deficit we inherited from the Uruguay Round. This means that our negotiations fail if the final outcome does

not lead to the establishment of a fair, equitable and pro-development rules-based multilateral trading system which enhances trade potential of developing and Least Developed Countries like Malawi. The system should also create appropriate policy space for our continued development agenda. For Malawi, these negotiations are of particular importance because of the enormous potential benefits that will be derived from concluding this Round.

**Chairperson,**

**Colleagues,**

Addressing poverty and creating incomes and employment to our people particularly

Women and Youth is our goal. The Sustainable Development Goals(SDGs) clearly stipulates this. My country is on a transformation and development path, however there are a number of challenges that constrain attainment of this agenda. One of them is unpredictable Market Access. Trade barriers are significantly increasing which are coming in different forms most of which are not tariff related.

According to the WTO (2017) report, despite all efforts, the LDCs' share of exports in international trade dropped to below 1% for the first time since 2007. However, we all recognise that, in order to create meaningful and ambitious market access opportunities on a lasting basis, there is no alternative to

delivering on the Doha commitments for LDCs in the framework of the multilateral trading system. It is my delegations hope that, MC11 can be another opportunity to deliver on these pressing issues.

**Chairperson,**

**Colleagues,**

As a country that has premised its development agenda on a trade-based economic strategy, Malawi is committed to the WTO and its ability to help create an international trade environment and rules based system as an integral part of the global economic and trade governance. Therefore, we cannot allow the Doha

Development Agenda negotiations to linger indefinitely. On the contrary we must work together with a heightened sense of urgency to close the gaps in all negotiating areas. Of course, we as LDCs have a responsibility to play a part but such a pursuit should be commensurate with our level of development.

**Chairperson,**

**Colleagues,**

Colleagues, Agriculture, which is the mainstay of the Malawi economy, remains central to the round in determining its development dimension. Malawi supports the concerns and proposals of the LDC

countries in calling for a reaffirmation of the mandate given in the General Council Decision of 1st August 2004, and confirmed by the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration of December 2005.

Importantly, to address cotton issues ambitiously, expeditiously and specifically, in relation to all trade distorting policies affecting the sector in all three pillars of market access, domestic support and export competition. Malawi associates itself with the position of the C4 Countries on Cotton.

**Chairperson,**

**Colleagues,**

Turning to the issue of Electronic Commerce and the digital platform, Malawi supports the Africa group position that we continue the exploration of issues under the 1998 WTO Work Programme on Electronic Commerce (Work Programme), and my delegation will not agree to go beyond the current structure or institutional arrangement of the Work Programme. E-commerce, and the digital economy have not been static, and Malawi like most WTO Members is still coming to grips with what appears to be very profound changes brought on by the digital transformation of which e-commerce is integral. Malawi therefore sees that the evolution of the sector makes it necessary to continue the exploratory discussions under the Work Programme. It is my delegations view, that the current Work

Programme has not been adequately tested to warrant a change in its structure.

**Chairperson,**  
**Colleagues,**

At present, the multilateral rules as they are, are constraining our domestic policy space and ability to industrialize. The critical areas for industrialization include: the use of local content requirements; infant industry protection, among others. These policy instruments which are developmental are being denied to developing countries.

This is the very reason why today Chairperson, we have the Doha Development Agenda to redress the imbalances inherited from Uruguay Round.

Therefore, Chairperson, we should not lose focus of the principles and mandate agreed in Doha. Issues of interest to LDCs should be given priority if all countries are to equitably benefit from the multilateral trading system. The WTO rules should contribute to the industrialization and structural transformation of our economies.

**Chairperson,  
Colleagues,**

Given our geographical challenge as a landlocked country, Malawi has a vital stake in the negotiations and implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement. Malawi is among one of the countries that has ratified the Agreement. We are mindful of the

mandate which explicitly links the undertaking of commitments to the provision of technical assistance and capacity building. We therefore, call on our developed country partners to commit to providing technical and financial assistance to help address trade facilitation challenges. This will ensure that LDCs like Malawi fully realize the gains from implementing the Trade Facilitation Agreement.

**Chairperson,**  
**Colleagues,**

I cannot leave this podium without commending the WTO and its partners for the Aid for Trade Initiatives such as the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF)

projects that have supported the integration of LDCs like Malawi into the Multilateral Trading System. We are confident that initiatives such as the Enhanced Integrated Framework and Aid for Trade will help Malawi address its supply-side constraints as well as the building of institutional capacities.

The guiding principles of the programme, including ownership by least developed countries, and the financial commitments being made are a recipe for success. On behalf of my delegation I urge donors to improve on pledges made to Phase 2 of the EIF in Nairobi and to come forward with substantial pledges here in Buenos Aires and beyond.

Chairperson, in closing, I wish to reiterate the commitment of my government to the multilateral trading system and urge all the key players in the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) to look beyond their interests and consider the impact the collapse of the negotiations would have on LDCs like Malawi. In conclusion, Mr Chairman, allow me to associate my delegation with statements made by the LDC group, African group, Africa Caribbean and Pacific group and G90 and their declarations that have been adopted at this meeting with the intention of advancing the Doha Process.

**I thank you for our attention.**