

Svenskt anförande för sr Linde den 12 december (tid TBC)

Ca 3 minuter (492 ord eller 2616 tecken utan blanksteg)

Fellow ministers, director-general, excellencies, distinguished delegates,

I would like to start by expressing my warm appreciation to Argentina and to chair Susanna Malcorra for hosting this conference.

I will tell you why this gathering is important for me, representing Sweden.

For a trade-oriented country the WTO is the foundation of the multilateral trading system.

A strong, rules-based, transparent and predictable multilateral trading system is a precondition for growth and jobs.

150 years ago, Sweden was one of the poorest countries in Europe. Since then - industrialisation, innovation, a sound legal political framework and free trade - have brought Sweden to the top of many international rankings.

With a population of 10 million, we have always looked abroad to seek new markets and partners. Whether it is about iron ore, cars, trucks, music or services – the **world is our arena and it is crucial that it remains open for trade.**

To co-create with our fellow partners for a more sustainable future, we need a robust, rules-based and transparent environment.

The small and poor countries are those who need an open, multilateral predictable trading system the most. It was true for Sweden and is still true for many today.

All members have a responsibility to increase the least developed countries involvement in the WTO and their share of global trade.

To promote LDC participation the Swedish government has contributed with 56 000 USD to the LDC Trust Fund.

In 2018 Sweden will allocate 2.1 million USD to the WTO Global Trust Fund, to provide negotiation support to developing countries.

Since 1995, the WTO has provided us with a legal framework. Although you don't see it or think of it every day, the WTO is the oxygen and the "bloodstream" of international trade. Therefore we must **handle our common artery, the WTO, with great care.**

Globalisation and trade do not only create winners. That is why the Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven launched "*The Global Deal*" initiative. Global Deal is about promoting dialogue. Sound labour relations and decent working conditions contribute to greater equality, increased productivity and inclusive economic development. A win-win-win situation for workers, companies and societies.

Since my first ministerial meeting in 1996, the WTO has taken many steps forward. However, trade and gender equality is an area where I would like to see further work and development. WTO must also address new issues such as e-commerce.

Getting more women into business and trade is sound economic policy. Gender equality contributes to growth in all countries, regardless of the level of development. This is important for me, Sweden and the EU.

In conclusion, we must:

- stand up for a modern, predictable, robust, rules-based multilateral and inclusive trading system
- improve the dialogue between social partners
- further gender integration and
- provide better access for developing countries to the world trading system.

Thank you very much.