

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY ZIMBABWE AT MC11 PLENARY SESSION:  
11/12/2017**

Thank you Mr Chairman

At the outset I would like to underscore the pre-eminence of rules based, fair and transparent Multilateral Trading System and we pledge our support to make this a successful organisation.

Now that we are working on a Ministerial Declaration as the possible outcome document for MC11, we would like to emphasise that this document should include the following language:

- Acknowledging the WTO as a rules based, fair and equitable Multilateral Trading System that upholds the principles of transparency, inclusiveness, bottom up and a member driven process.
- Reaffirmation of the DDA, centrality of development and the SDT principles of this round of negotiations.
- Continuation of work on the remaining DDA issues.
- Reaffirmation of all previous Ministerial decisions.

If we however, fail to agree on a declaration and we are forced to have the chair's summary/statement as the outcome document, I wish to underscore that we should have the opportunity to input into this document so that our interests and views, which I outlined earlier, are well articulated in the text.

Regarding substance I wish to underscore the following;

- Zimbabwe is an agriculturally based economy and over 70% of our population lives in the rural areas and depend on agriculture. Agriculture contributes significantly to our employment, GDP, export earnings and is a source of livelihoods. In this regard, outcomes in all elements of agriculture are a priority for my delegation.

- We should work towards a meaningful outcome on elimination of agricultural trade distorting domestic subsidies.
- Members should adopt an approach that will substantially reduce the trade distorting support by major developed country subsidizers and in this regard, elimination of AMS should be the first stage to correct the imbalances in the Agreement on Agriculture.
- Furthermore, post MC11, the reform process should continue and ensure there are disciplines on the green box form of support which has been proved to be trade distorting. Our challenges as developing countries, regarding subsidy concentration should also be addressed post MC11 and article 6,2 and SDT for developing countries should be preserved.
- Regarding cotton, the draft decision by the C4 on elimination of trade distorting domestic subsidies should be adopted at MC11.
- Zimbabwe maintains a Public Stockholding Program to cushion itself against price volatility and effects of climate change and drought that the country continues to face and which has resulted in periods of chronic food insecurity. We therefore expect to have an outcome on an effective and accessible Permanent Solution on Public Stockholding for Food Security Purposes at MC11.
- The deadline for a permanent solution on Public Stockholding for Food Security Purposes (PSH) is MC11. This permanent solution should have no burdensome, onerous, ex -ante or conditional transparency provisions.
- The permanent solution should not be linked to domestic support as this has a separate mandate and track. Furthermore it should cover existing and new programs as well as foodstuffs for all developing countries and LDCs.

- We also anticipate having an outcome on an effective and easy to use Special Safeguard Mechanism to protect farmers in developing countries against import surges and price declines, and there should be no linkages with the market access negotiations.
- Regarding development, we are concerned and frustrated that in spite of much effort by the G90 to justify the need for strengthening and making effective and operational SDT provisions, some members decided to disengage and we could therefore not reach consensus on the matter.
- We hope that members will engage constructively in order to have a positive outcome as this element represents development, one of the core principles of the WTO. This is also an element that will promote industrialisation, diversification and integration of developing countries and LDCs into the Multilateral Trading system and is also in line with the AU's Agenda 2063, "The Africa We Want".
- Regarding e-commerce, we reiterate that it is premature to have rules on this because of the large digital divide. We should work towards bridging the digital, regulatory, capacity and knowledge gaps and continue our work under the mandate of the work program on e-commerce which is exploratory. Work on this has not yet been exhausted and the mandate is quite broad, comprehensive and covers developmental issues such as technology transfer and infrastructure development.
- We are not in support of any changes to the current structure of the e-commerce work program which is quite appropriate and is supported by subsidiary bodies that are technical, and a dedicated session for cross cutting issues.
- Regarding Domestic Regulation there are still large divergences on systemic issues of mandates, scope and principles which cannot easily be resolved, even at MC11 and in view of this, the matter should be dealt with post MC11. We reiterate our concerns that the

current proposals impeach on our right to regulate and will diminish our policy space to develop. Furthermore, some of the proposals have burdensome transparency obligations whilst some lack the negotiating mandate.

- Regarding new issues, we are not in support of any negotiations on MSMEs, Investment Facilitation and E-Commerce as there is no mandate on this. In the case of Investment Facilitation, this is a Singapore issue which, in line with paragraph 1g of the 2004 July package should not be discussed before the DDA is concluded. In line with paragraph 34 of the Nairobi Declaration, negotiations on new issues require consensus of the WTO membership.

Lastly, I wish to underscore that the DDA is very much alive; it can only be concluded by consensus. We therefore call upon all members to prioritise the remaining issues of the DDA and my delegation is ready to engage constructively for the success of this Ministerial Conference and the Multilateral Trading System.

**I thank you chair.**