



STATEMENT

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MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY
REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA**

**AT THE
NINTH SESSION OF THE WTO MINISTERIAL
CONFERENCE**

**03 - 06 DECEMBER 2013
Bali, Indonesia**

Mr. Chairman, distinguished colleagues, ladies and gentlemen;

1. Let me take this opportunity to express my delegation's gratitude to the Government and the people of the Republic of Indonesia, for hosting this Ministerial Conference in an endeavor to advance the WTO work program.

Mr. Chairman,

2. There is a sense in which one can be excused for expressing some disappointment, given that we are not, as we speak, able to toast the successful conclusion of negotiations. This is particularly significant given that we had carved for ourselves a modest **package** consisting of **Trade Facilitation, Agriculture and Development/LDCs issues.**

Mr. Chairman,

3. The need to address the imbalance in the Multilateral Trading System remains urgent, and the goal of the **Doha Development Agenda remains justifiable.** This is more so that our economies continue to struggle to recover from

the aftermath of the global economic and financial crisis. We, the small and vulnerable economies, face persistent challenges of **high levels of unemployment, high inflation, and worsening debt** situation amongst others.

4. We have, for over a decade, looked forward to a Multilateral Trading System that could support our efforts in addressing these challenges. The relevance of the WTO in dealing with these global challenges cannot be overemphasized, and as such, our continued engagement and dedication to finding a solution to the current impasse remains strong. Our collective efforts, political leadership and consideration of one another's critical needs and concerns remain key ingredients for the success of our future endeavors.
5. Let us be forthright and state that much is expected from those with greater capacity, developed or developing in the form of making concessions for the good of the majority.

Mr. Chairman,

6. **Aid-for-Trade** remains critical in supporting developing countries in addressing the supply-side constraints and

trade-related infrastructure deficiencies. We would like to express our **appreciation to the donor community** for their continued support and call for the sustenance of this initiative. We commit ourselves to efforts geared towards the improvement in the delivery of this initiative.

7. **Mr. Chairman**, on development, as we engage to draw the Post-2015 Development Agenda, the role of trade in contributing to sustainable development should be prominent. I, therefore, call on the WTO to play a proactive role in the formulation of the Agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

8. Yes, we do not have a deal currently. **But to express deep-rooted pessimism is not only defeatist in nature, but also ignores tremendous efforts by all that went into the negotiations for a “Bali Package”.** In this connection, the **extraordinary efforts by the Director General** contributed in no small measure. We would do ourselves much good by preserving the gains in order to build upon them **now**.

9. **Mr. Chairman**, as we engage, we should continue to uphold the key principles of **full participation, inclusiveness, and**

transparency. Development should also remain the anchor of any further discussions.

Mr. Chairman,

10. There is no denying that **ten (10) years is too long** for the world to have remained the same. New challenges would have emerged. That as it may, the DDA mandate remains not only relevant but imperative.

11. As I draw to a close, I make the obvious observation that Free Trade Agreements are proliferating, and we express apprehension that they may harm the multilateral trading system. Care needs to be taken that greater marginalization of the small and vulnerable does not occur through the imposition of WTO-plus obligations in FTAs.

12. In conclusion, **Mr. Chairman**, let me reiterate Botswana's commitment to the work program of the WTO. We stand ready to do our part within the limits of our capacity.

I thank you.