

**Statement by H.E. Ms Anne Ruth Herkes
Federal Minister of Economics and Technology**

Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Germany is a firm advocate of a successful multilateral trade system.

We therefore wish to do our utmost to make this ministerial conference a success and to strengthen and develop the tried and trusted regulatory system for world trade provided by the WTO.

The multilateral trading system is a driving force for growth and prosperity in all countries, and a guarantor for the stability of the global economy.

We need the multilateral trading system in order to ensure that the interests of the developing countries – and particularly of the least developed countries – play an equal part.

The multilateral system helps to keep markets open, even during times of crisis, and to resolutely combat protectionism.

In the ongoing crisis in the global economy, the WTO has provided very good services in terms of monitoring trade policy measures in order to stifle protectionism.

The ninth WTO ministerial conference can go down in history as the conference which gave a fresh boost to the global trading system.

That is our goal.

Without a fresh stimulus, there is a danger of a lapse into protectionism, national egotisms and a further weakening of the world economy. We certainly do not want to let that happen.

The ninth WTO ministerial conference must not be remembered as the “poisoned apple that sent Snow White into everlasting sleep”.

The WTO is just as beautiful, and we want to keep it alive – in fact, we want to make it livelier than ever!

That is why, here and now, we must hammer out a compromise for the Bali package. The Doha talks have got bogged down, and we need this package to get things moving again.

We can't simply push Doha aside or ignore it. Nor do we want to. We need to move forward together, here and now at Bali.

Only if we do this will the WTO be able to regain lost confidence in its capacity to further develop international trade law.

And this will generate a fresh dynamism amongst the WTO countries and pave the way for further steps towards reducing trade barriers and improving market access.

In the last century, the world trading system substantially reduced tariffs and quantitative restrictions. It has begun to increasingly integrate the developing countries into global trade.

More than two-thirds of the least developed countries (34 of 49 LDCs at present) have already become WTO members, and we would like to encourage the others to take advantage of the relaxed accession conditions and not to stay outside.

In the 21st century, we need the world trading system more than ever, and we need it in an up-to-date, modern form.

The continuing integration of our economic systems, and the deepening and broadening of the global value chains go to show that only the multilateral trading system is in a position to supply the right answers to the challenges of the 21st century.

Only the multilateral trading system can ensure a fair balance of interests between industrial and developing countries. The WTO's dispute-settlement system is a guarantor of this.

We want an open world of international understanding, free trade and the exchange of talents and knowledge.

We now need the shared political will of all sides. We are close to agreement on a Bali package. The conference must end with a result.

Our new Director-General, Roberto Azevêdo, has laid the foundations for this.

In the brief time he has been in office, his achievements have been almost superhuman: in day-and-night sessions, he has managed to forge compromises and to bring the positions as close together as was possible before the conference.

He deserves our special thanks and recognition for this!

Germany is ready to constructively support all the efforts to reach an agreement. We are ready to make compromises as long as others are also willing to move. The time for tactics is over.

Future generations will judge us by what we achieved here at Bali.

On this note, I wish us all a good and successful ministerial conference which will generate a vital stimulus for our global economic system.

12 years after Doha, the time has come to deliver some initial results.

Thank you.