

**STATEMENT BY HONORABLE CAROLYN RODRIGUES-BIRKETT, MINISTER OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND FOREIGN TRADE OF THE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA
ON BEHALF OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM)
AT THE 9TH WTO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
BALI, INDONESIA
5TH DECEMBER, 2013**

Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the Caribbean Community, I wish to thank your Government and the people of Indonesia for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements made for this meeting.

Let me also welcome the new Director General, Ambassador Roberto Azevedo and the energy and dynamism he has brought to the Organization coupled with the deep understanding that he has demonstrated for the issues of importance to developing countries, including small, vulnerable economies.

Mr Chairman, the membership of the Caribbean Community wishes to associate ourselves with the statements made on behalf of the African, Caribbean and Pacific group (ACP) and Small and Vulnerable Economies.

Mr. Chairman, the Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) wish to register our continued support for the multilateral trading system. We therefore regret that the promise of the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) is still to be realized. We had hoped that this would have ushered in a new dispensation of development-oriented solutions to problems faced by economies such as ours in this era of globalization.

We appreciate the considerable efforts which have been made over the past few months by the Director General and WTO Members to craft a package for adoption by this Conference. We are therefore disappointed that consensus was not possible in Geneva and call for the necessary political impetus so that the Bali package could be agreed and adopted before this Conference ends. We believe this is possible.

CARICOM places great importance on the negotiating function of the WTO which still holds the promise of finding development oriented solutions to a wide range of trade related issues of concern to small and vulnerable members. Another failure in the decision making function of the WTO will lead to a greater loss of confidence in the Multilateral Trading System's ability to deliver results, beneficial to all and in particular the most vulnerable.

As we look toward the Post Bali Work programme, CARICOM wishes to highlight a few key issues.

We must work towards the completion of the Doha Development Agenda with particular emphasis on Special and Differential Treatment for developing and least developed countries. We must ensure, among other things that draft modalities which provide

flexibilities for small, vulnerable economies, particularly in Agriculture and NAMA, are preserved and become part of a final outcome.

CARICOM places great importance on the Work Programme on Small Economies and this must be intensified in accordance with the Ministerial Decision to be adopted by this Conference.

The operation of the Dispute Settlement process continues to be of concern. The ongoing reform negotiations must address issues of compliance with rulings, especially those in favour of small economies. A CARICOM Member has experienced this first hand and situations like this serve to undermine the credibility of the Dispute Settlement Mechanism. The enhancement of Third Party Rights must also be addressed so that small economies can represent their interests more effectively.

With regard to Aid for Trade, we call on the WTO Secretariat to intensify its advocacy and monitoring role. CARICOM launched its regional Aid for Trade Strategy earlier this year and the support of the international community in making this strategy a reality is vital as the region seeks to integrate into the global economy.

CARICOM takes note of the growing trend towards plurilateral arrangements in the WTO system and their implications for the effective functioning of the multilateral trading system. This is a trend which requires careful evaluation.

Mr Chairman, we welcome Yemen into the WTO family. One of our Member States is also pursuing its accession negotiations and, in this context, CARICOM calls upon the WTO to support the simplification of the accession process for small and vulnerable economies. These countries should not be called upon to give concessions beyond their levels of development.

Mr. Chairman, in closing the Member States of the Caribbean Community place great importance on the effective functioning of the rules based multilateral trading system. We see this as the best guarantee for our successful integration into an increasingly globalized economy. I cannot overemphasize that it is the small and vulnerable economies that stand to lose the most if success eludes us here in Bali. For us, failure is just not an option. We must succeed in Bali.

I thank you.