

WTO Ninth Ministerial Conference

Plenary Session, 4 December 2013

Hong Kong, China

Chair, Director-General, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the past two months, under the outstanding leadership of the Director-General, Roberto Azevedo, we have seen negotiations on the Bali Package transformed. Members have worked together to stabilize 10 negotiating texts. We cracked the most difficult areas in the Trade Facilitation Agreement, including Section II of that Agreement, in a matter of days. None of this would have been possible a few months ago. Although we did not manage to agree on the full package in Geneva, it does not mean we must accept failure. With the solid foundation of the work done so far, we are very close to the finish line. It will only take a few more steps to bring it to fruition.

2. I reaffirm **Hong Kong, China's** strong will to achieve a package deal at Bali. Our commitment to the multilateral trading system remains as strong as ever. This is for one simple reason - Hong Kong, China has benefitted, and will continue to benefit, from the stable, transparent, inclusive, and rules-based system under the WTO structure. I would commend the proposed Bali package to all developing and least developed countries because of what they stand to gain – not only from

the increase in trade volume and job opportunities, but also from the truly groundbreaking, tailor made special and differential treatment set out in Section II of the Trade Facilitation Agreement. Millions of people around the world will share immediate and long-term benefits of the Bali package. If all these are well within reach, why would we want to let go?

3. **Hong Kong, China** does not see putting off a decision on the package to post-Bali as a viable option. It is now or never. Failure in Bali would have grave consequences for the WTO. If we fail having come so close, the WTO's negotiation function will suffer irreparable damage, and will run the risk of falling into irrelevance. It is in all our interest to have a strong WTO.

4. I trust fellow colleagues can see that the package is eminently doable. I urge all of us, working with the Director-General, to make that final political push and cross the finish line, here in Bali.

5. If there is no Bali package, it is futile to talk about post-Bali. At this moment, I would only say that WTO should be a forward-looking organisation and should seek to address pertinent trade issues as they emerge. Thank you.
