

KENYA STATEMENT DURING THE FIRST PLENARY SESSION OF THE 9TH WTO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE IN BALI INDONESIA

Mr. Chairman

On behalf of the Government and the people of Kenya I would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to the government and the people of Indonesia for accepting to host this Ministerial Conference, and for the warm hospitality and excellent facilitation that has been extended to me and my delegation since our arrival.

Let me take this opportunity to recognize the good work that has gone into the preparatory process for this Conference and to hope that we will be able to use this time to concretely move forward. The leadership shown by you, Director-General Roberto Azevêdo, and the Chairman of the General Council, Ambassador Shahid Bashir (Pakistan) is appreciated.

Mr. Chairman

The 9th WTO Ministerial Conference comes at a time when members need to seriously consider the challenge of relevance for a WTO that twelve years after the launch of DDA negotiations has yet to conclude them. In this time, the landscape of trade

and development has changed significantly, mostly for the better where Kenya and our region are concerned, but there is still an urgent need for a deeper integration of developing and least developed countries into the multilateral trading system. Kenya is therefore disappointed that no agreement has been reached either on the Bali Package or the post-Bali Work Programme.

The missed deadlines have been missed opportunities that were intended to improve the lives of millions of our people. I know you will join me in observing that we cannot continue negotiating forever, not when scarce resources are dedicated to managing delegations in Geneva even while issues of employment creation, income growth, and raising of the living standard of our people remain elusive.

Mr. Chairman

Our collective membership should be the guarantor of a predictable and transparent global trading environment whose proper functioning is key to all of us achieving our economic growth goals. Concluding the DDA negotiations would mean that the development component promised during Doha Ministerial Conference has been achieved. Following through on our promises is imperative if the WTO is to maintain its prestige and standing among our citizens and the business communities that drive trade and economic growth in our countries and across our borders.

After twelve years of negotiations, it may not be possible to tie all the strings here in Bali.. For example, how can we narrow the wide divergence on trade facilitation to achieve the balanced outcome within the agreement and the other issues in the Bali package? On Agriculture, surely we will struggle to truly address food security challenges that are directly linked to the livelihoods of many poor people in the developing countries using a temporary solution when we should promote policies that offer predictability and transparency. Regarding development, we are now paying more attention to the monitoring mechanism instead of the actual mandate on strengthening the special and differential treatment provisions. A wise man once said a "journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." Perhaps the time has come for Ministers to provide guidance rather than negotiating amongst us in less than 4 days, and expect positive results on all the outstanding issues.

Mr. Chairman

Let us begin by safeguarding the gains achieved in the negotiations so far particularly in Agriculture and Non Agricultural Market Access (NAMA). Then let us start the journey to concluding DDA by noting how much has changed in a dozen years and agreeing not to lose sight of the key principles of negotiations that have served us well in the past. Kenya for one has undertaken deep reforms, particularly in ensuring the efficiency of import chains. A container of goods offloaded in Mombasa used to take 18 days to reach Uganda; it now takes 3

days after the last few months of determined reforms. Such success must now be matched by increased opportunities and capacity in our exports if we are indeed to have a global trading system committed to the principle of taking 'fully into account the principle of special and differential treatment for developing and least-developed countries.'

The same principle, in addition to the commitments we have made to ensure sustainable development, applies to the challenge of food security. We promised that we would move forward with ensuring 'untied, in-kind food aid and monetization.' Farmers in countries with dire food security problems should not be impoverished by food aid thus sustaining poverty and emergencies. This is an item that we can get some real movement on here in Bali and it will have the virtue of directly allowing markets to continue serving the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable.

Mr. Chairman,

While making such explicit recommendations, we reaffirm the importance of single undertaking, transparency and inclusiveness as the basis of our engagement. Whereas the Doha declaration provides for flexibility to provisionally conclude negotiations in some areas and implement them on a provisional basis, it also provides that early agreements shall be taken into account in assessing the overall balance of the negotiations and thus still respecting the single undertaking principle.

As we work together here in Bali, let us look ahead for the next opportunity to put more wins on the board. Our minimum expectation is that we will agree on a concrete post-Bali Programme that will help us to continue down the road to concluding the DDA negotiations. This will allow us to re-affirm the creditability of the WTO as an institution governing the rules of international trade.

I thank you all for your kind attention