

**STATEMENT BY HONOURABLE MR SOSTEIN GWENGWE, M.P, MINISTER OF
INDUSTRY AND TRADE AT THE NINNTH WTO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE,**

BALI, INDONESIA, 3RD TO 6TH DECEMBER 2013

On the onset, I would like to join those that have spoken before me in thanking the Government and people of Indonesia for graciously hosting this Ministerial Conference and for the warm hospitality accorded to me and my delegation since our arrival. I would also like to express my appreciation to you, Mr. Chairman; the Director General of the WTO; and the Chairman of the General Council as well as the Secretariat of the WTO for your remarkable role in organizing this important Conference.

I would like to preface my statement by underlining the need for the multilateral trade system to be responsive to the needs and economic conditions of member states, particularly the least developed country member countries such as my country, Malawi. As we are all aware the outcome of the Uruguay Round of trade negotiations has inherent serious imbalances which have negatively affected efforts by least developed countries to integrate into the global economy.

In 2001, the whole WTO membership met in Doha, Qatar and agreed on the development agenda which was acceptable to all of us. The Doha round generated high hopes of sustainable economic growth and prosperity among millions of the people, more specifically the poor. These hopes should not fade away. This is why our mandate has, was and still is to address the development deficit we inherited from the Uruguay Round. It is my expectation; that the Doha Development Round will therefore, address these imbalances. An ambitious outcome of the Doha Development Round is crucially important to create employment and through that, prosperity and economic growth in all parts of the world.

The Malawi Government believes that the Doha Development Round will be meaningful to LDCs if its outcome entails the establishment of a fair and pro-development rules-based multilateral trading system, which enhances our trade potential and creates sufficient policy space for our continued development. As a country we are cognizant of the progress that has so far been made in the Doha Development Round negotiations particularly on the Bali deliverables. We need to preserve what has been agreed, guard against backtracking and ensure that the key development aspects of the Doha Development Round are preserved. Malawi therefore advocates persistently that development is intrinsic to every aspect of the Doha Development Round. In this respect my delegation fully associates itself with the Statements made by the coordinator of the ACP, Africa and LDC groups.

As a country which has premised its development on a trade based economic strategy Malawi is committed to the WTO and its ability to help create an international trade environment and rules-based system as an integral part of global economic and trade governance. In this respect, Mr. Chairman, Malawi is concerned with the delays in the conclusion of the Doha Development Round negotiations. We welcome the proposed package on Agriculture, Trade Facilitation and more importantly the LDC deliverables for Bali.

Given our geographical challenge as a landlocked country, Malawi has a vital stake in the negotiations on Trade Facilitation. We, therefore, take cognizant of the good progress made in the negotiations. However, we are mindful of the mandate which explicitly links the undertaking of commitments to the provision of technical assistance and capacity building. We therefore call on our developed country partners to guarantee that our requests for technical and financial assistance will be entertained.

My delegation is hopeful that MC9 will be another opportunity to deliver on these pressing issues. We however, call on a heightened sense of urgency, mutual understanding and flexibility to close the gaps in all the negotiating areas on the basis of the latest revised draft modalities to deliver on a complete Doha package. Once again, Malawi would like to reiterate that a tangible and meaningful developmental outcome of the Doha Development Round to LDCs, and Malawi in particular, is a key priority.

LDCs like Malawi are unable to take full advantage of the preferential market access offered to them due to a number of trade-related supply side constraints. These include high transport costs, stringent SPS requirements and standards, buyers' requirements and complicated Rules of Origin, trade procedures and documentation. Measures to address these constraints will make a significant contribution towards achieving the Millennium Development Goal (MDGs) and assist the Malawi Government in implementing development plan. For this reason, Malawi is requesting additional resources through Aid for Trade and the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) initiatives to deal with these supply side constraints.

I wish to join others in calling for an extension of the EIF programme beyond 2015. The guiding principles of the programme, namely ownership by LDCs, more substantial and predictable financial resources, more effective coordination and governance of the programme, and a focus on the results, are a recipe for success ahead. We are confident that initiatives such as EIF and Aid for Trade will help Malawi diversify her export base and improve our participation in world trade which is currently very minimal.

Malawi acknowledges the role played by UNCTAD, ITC, UNDP, the World Bank, and IMF in assisting developing and least-developed countries in building their capacities in the trade sector among others and in particular, I call for increased and continued support to Malawi. Malawi also appreciates the bilateral technical assistance provided by development partners.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Malawi's commitment to the WTO and the multilateral trading system. Malawi like any other least developed country, will strive to contribute to the strengthening of the multilateral trading system despite our limited financial and human resources.