

WTO 9th Ministerial Conference

Plenary Statement by Hon Tim Groser, New Zealand Minister of Trade

2 December 2013

- Chair, colleagues, we are here in Bali to fulfil what we agreed at the 8th Ministerial Conference – to deliver on what we can in the present context where there is no political consensus on how we can conclude the Doha Round. This Ministerial Meeting is therefore the culmination of two years of work to identify and finalise a range of issues that are ready for early agreement ahead of the fuller package. I agree with you, Director-General, that none of this is impossible. We have texts that leave only a handful of outstanding questions to be resolved. I see no reason why we cannot agree to do this here in Bali.
- So let us at least show that we are still capable of delivering results. The WTO remains New Zealand's number one trade priority: To address the issues that concern us as a trading nation, and to promote broad-based, inclusive development and growth, nothing has more potential than the multilateral rules based trading system.
- However, let us not pretend that this package – symbolically important though it is - is an end in itself. We still have to confront unfinished business. We must establish a fair set of rules governing trade in agriculture. And it is not just about agriculture. NAMA and services, and a host of other issues, also need to be addressed.
- But even if we were to completely re-set the negotiations and the covering mandate and start again – though let me be clear, I am not advocating that we do so – I can guarantee we would end up with the same set of important challenges in front of us. Standing out as a prime example of great concern to my country is the continued allowance to use export subsidies in agriculture.
- Only in the WTO can we solve these problems effectively. And at some point, we will need to return to the WTO in a serious and comprehensive way. Evolving even this modest Bali

package has tested us greatly. It reminds us that we need to confront the incorrect assumption that somehow more modest packages of outcomes, dealing with smaller sets of issues, while parking all the difficult conversations, is some easy solution to help us move crucial issues to conclusion.

- To make the important compromises, my conclusion remains that only a large package of outcomes will provide us with the political cover and leverage needed to do so. The road to Bali has taught us this. It is not a question of scaling back ambition to what is achievable – but rather scaling up to a package that is large enough for us all to buy into. That won't happen easily, and it won't happen quickly – and we will work closely with the Director-General in 2014 and beyond - but in my view it's the only way we are going to deliver for everyone on the promises of the Doha Round in the years ahead.