



WTO 9th Ministerial Conference

Plenary Session

A Statement

by H.E. Mr. Sultan Al-Khater

**Undersecretary of the Ministry of Economy and
Commerce**

Head of Qatar Delegation

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HE Gita Wirjawan, The Trade Minister of Indonesia

HE Roberto Azevedo, The WTO Director General

HE Ambassador Shaihd Bashir, The WTO General Council Chairman

Distinguished delegates

Ladies & Gentlemen

Allow me, first of all, to congratulate HE Gita Wirjawan, The Minister of Trade of Indonesia on his election to the chairmanship of our Conference, and wish him the best of luck in the discharge of his duties. I would – through him – wish to thank the government and people of the Republic of Indonesia for their gracious hospitality and excellent arrangements in bringing this important event to fruition. Finally, I would like to thank the WTO's Director General HE Roberto Azevedo and his team – as well as the General Council Chairman Ambassador Shahid Bashir - for their untiring work and dedication.

Excellencies

The new leadership in Qatar is committed to continue to faithfully implement our development strategy; in addition to that, Qatar has always taken very seriously its responsibility as a member of the international community. We, as a nation, were very proud to associate the name of our capital with the first GATT/WTO Round dedicated to integrating least developed and developing countries into the world trading system, while giving our developed partners the chance to address issues of importance to them too. In short, it was the first “balanced” Round, with the “development” flavour at its core.

Yet we meet here in Bali just over 12 years to the day from those fateful days in November 2001, when we launched the Doha Development Agenda. Lamentably, and despite what I would describe as “heroic

efforts” from the developing-country members, we arrive here, not with a comprehensive development-centred package, but with a package that addresses the needs of the few. The open vistas opened by the DDA those many years ago seem to be dimming by the day. It is with this in mind that I would like to call upon all WTO members to “dig deeper” to achieve a comprehensive conclusion to the DDA in all areas of its mandate.

Allow me now to address a number of issues that Qatar believes are of great importance for the success of our work.

We – as most Arab WTO members do – are proud to see our sister country Yemen designated as a new member of the WTO. It is our hope that Yemen’s integration into the multi-lateral trading system will give a boost to other Arab acceding countries.

This brings me to an important point. Qatar, alongside other Arab members, has consistently called for the introduction of the Arab language into the WTO in line with other intergovernmental organisations. We hope that we shall see – in the near future - some development in this area. On a parallel note, Qatar – as with other Arab members – would like to contribute to resolving the impasse surrounding the observer status of the League of Arab States (our regional integration body), and seek the inclusion – into our Conference’s final documents – of a work programme to review the rules of procedure and regulation of our Ministerial Conferences to address this issue

Ladies & gentlemen

On a more technical note, the biggest developmental challenge of the 21st century is to provide sufficient food and energy to all. For a net food importing economy like Qatar, this development objective implies the primacy of food security over any narrow commercial interests. We will, therefore, support any decision providing WTO members with the flexibility to take measures that enhance their food security.

As an energy exporting country, the State of Qatar attaches great importance to the issue of Trade Facilitation, particularly to Articles VII and XI of the Draft Agreement. We strongly support an outcome to enhance the freedom of transit; including goods moved via fixed infrastructure like pipelines. This, we believe, will contribute to addressing the challenges related to energy poverty around the world.

Furthermore, and in accordance with paragraph 31 (III) of Doha Declaration, Qatar strongly holds the view that the elimination of tariffs on environment-friendly products like natural gas and related technologies will enhance - not only their global diffusion - but also help in addressing the challenges of global climate change.

Excellencies ,

Ladies & gentlemen ,

Before ending my speech, I would like to recall the years of negotiation that have brought us to this stage in the WTO's history. It would be – indeed – a sorry thing that the investment made by all members to date should be left by the side. It is, therefore, imperative that we hold on to it, and build upon it in our future work programmes.

To conclude, Qatar urges again the WTO Members to agree, here in Bali, on a clear and time-intense road-map to complete the DDA within its mandate and on the basis of Single Undertaking and Consensus. This, in our view, will be a great contribution to the United Nations' Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Thank you.