

**STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE VASANT BHARATH,
MINISTER OF TRADE, INDUSTRY AND INVESTMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
TO THE 9th WTO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE, BALI, INDONESIA
4th DECEMBER 2013**

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, for Trinidad and Tobago, the launch of the Doha Development Agenda, in 2001, was a pivotal point in the history of the WTO since it brought key development issues to the heart of trade negotiations and with it, the promise of rebalancing trade in favour of the more vulnerable countries. Unfortunately, 12 years later, the DDA is at an impasse.

Notwithstanding these challenges, Trinidad and Tobago strongly believes that the World Trade Organization and the multilateral trading system can still meet the hopes and aspirations of all segments of society, not least amongst them, the poor and vulnerable.

It is with this in mind that Trinidad and Tobago welcomed the Bali package and the pillars contained therein, since each element holds the prospect of enhancing trade and the opportunity to improve the living conditions of many around the world. Though disappointed that coming into Bali from Geneva, there was no consensus on the package, we are optimistic that Ministers present here in Bali, will inject the required political will to move the discussions forward to accomplish an agreement here in Bali during this

week.

In addition, we remain optimistic that the interrelated goals inherent in the Bali package, namely improved ease of movement of goods across borders, food security and the building of supply capacity among developing countries, can be achieved through a successful outcome of our current discussions.

In the context of trade facilitation, Trinidad and Tobago supports the adoption of a balanced approach which links the disciplines to the technical assistance and special and differential treatment required for developing countries to implement them. As a net food importing developing country we are in support of proposals intended to promote food security. Trinidad and Tobago supports the initiative to make special and differential provisions more precise, operational and effective for the benefits to be realized by developing countries.

It is therefore critical that, as members of this important institution, we make our best efforts at strengthening the key functions of the WTO relating to the making of rules and decisions, dispute settlement, compliance with the Agreements and very importantly the realization of the ideals and goals of the Doha Development Round. I must say that Trinidad and Tobago, as a small developing country, continues to invest a lot in the success of the multilateral trading system as an important framework for the growth and development of international trade.

Mr. Chairman, where do we go from here? Our actions during this week should not only be to send a symbolic message that the WTO continues to be

credible and relevant, but also to outline pragmatic steps that are likely to lift many populations out of world poverty and to provide hope for the near future.

Specifically, we support the preservation of progress made so far in the DDA, especially those in relation to LDCs and SVEs; secondly we advocate a prompt and efficient resolution to the Bali issues here in Indonesia; thirdly, we urge other Ministers to advocate for a clear, transparent, goal driven and time-bound Work Programme to guide our negotiators in the post-Bali period.

For Trinidad and Tobago, key to the post Bali Work Programme, must be a focus on those issues that are very important to the groups in which we operate, such as CARICOM and the SVEs, particularly development support towards advancement of the activities of Smaller Economies.

Relatedly, it is essential that the Dispute Settlement Mechanism be understood to work for all. In particular, we need to create the environment, in which the rulings of the Dispute Settlement Body are respected by rich and poor members alike, big and small members alike and the mighty and weaker members alike. We must never allow might to be right. One should have the confidence that each Member, regardless of status, is being adequately served by the Dispute Settlement Mechanism.

My delegation wishes to welcome Yemen to the WTO. While we recognize that WTO accession helps to provide a predictable business environment we must ensure that the process is not too onerous or costly for acceding

countries, particularly SVEs.

Chairman, in closing, I take the opportunity to thank the Government and the people of Indonesia for successfully hosting this 9th Ministerial Conference. Above all, I call on my colleagues to provide the impetus needed here in Bali for a successful outcome on the Bali package and further to deliver on the DDA in the post Bali period.

Thank you