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FRIENDS OF DEVELOPMENT MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

15 December 2011
Geneva, Switzerland

The following communication, dated 15 December 2011, and addressed to the Chairman of the General Council is being circulated at the request of the Delegation of Kenya.

I am pleased to forward a Ministerial Declaration adopted on 15 December 2011 in a Ministerial Meeting held in Geneva of the 'Friends of Development' group comprising the African Group, the African Caribbean Pacific Group, the Least Developed Countries, the Small Vulnerable Economies, Argentina, Brazil, China, Ecuador, India, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela.

This meeting was presided over by the Coordinator of the Africa Group H.E. Amos Muhinga Kimunya, Minister of Transport, Kenya.

The Ministers belonging to the "Friends of Development", which includes more than one hundred developing countries (list attached), urge that this Declaration, be taken on record as part of the deliberations of the Ministerial Conference and also be included in part two of the Chair's concluding statement. We further request that this Declaration be also issued as a formal WTO document.

1. We, the Ministers of the African Union, the African Caribbean Pacific Group, the Least Developed Countries, the Small Vulnerable Economies, Argentina, Brazil, China, Ecuador, India, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela met on 15 December 2011 in Geneva before the 8th World Trade Organisation (WTO) Ministerial Conference, to review the current status of developments relating to multilateral trade.

2. We remain fully committed to concluding the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) negotiations. We believe that without the completion of the Doha Round, the credibility of the WTO would suffer a damaging blow and it would seriously circumscribe the WTO's future endeavours.

3. The Doha Round needs to be concluded, bearing fully in mind the membership's commitment to the core principles of the DDA, viz. the development mandate, single undertaking, decision making

based on multilateral consensus and progress made and a bottom up approach that is inclusive and transparent.

4. We are disappointed at the impasse in the Doha Round. We are willing to look at different approaches that are constructive to resolving the impasse. However, we do not support the adoption of a plurilateral approach to concluding the Round or parts of it, because it goes against the principles of multilateralism and inclusiveness. Therefore, any fresh approach has to be a multilateral consensus based one, firmly anchored within the Doha Mandate.

5. We also acknowledge that Members should try to explore making progress on elements of the Doha Declaration that allow them to reach provisional or definitive agreements based on consensus, but the first priority must be given to issues of interest to the least developed countries (LDCs), such as the full implementation of Decision 36 of Annex F of the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration, Cotton, Agreement Specific Proposals and other development issues like Special and Differential Treatment (S&DT) in different areas, the Monitoring Mechanism, Implementation Related Issues and concerns and Agriculture.

6. Development has to remain at the centre of any approach not only for an early harvest programme but across all areas of the Doha Round negotiations and other WTO work. In this context, we reaffirm the need to strengthen the functioning of the Committee on Trade and Development (CTD) so as to enable it to conduct a Development Review of all S&D provisions in the WTO Agreements.

7. We recognise that the WTO provides a forum for discussion of trade related matters. Any trade related issue should be discussed in the appropriate body constituted under the WTO, provided it follows due process and is guided by the principles of inclusiveness, transparency and multilateral consensus based decision making.

8. We firmly stand against the rise of protectionism and remain committed to resist it in all forms, provided there is full recognition of a Member's ability to use WTO consistent measures to achieve its legitimate objectives of growth, development and stability.

9. We welcome the accession of Vanuatu, Samoa, Montenegro and the Russian Federation to the WTO. We also welcome the decision to evolve benchmarks for the accession of Least Developed Countries and urge Members to fully commit themselves to the letter and spirit of the decision in order to make the WTO a more representative and universal organization.

List of Members of 'Friends of Development'

African Caribbean Pacific Group (ACP)

WTO members (58): Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Suriname, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe

African group

WTO members (41): Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe

LDC (Least Developed Countries)

WTO members (31): Angola, Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Haiti, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia

Small, Vulnerable Economies (SVEs)

WTO members (15): Barbados, Bolivia, Plurinational State of, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Fiji, Guatemala, Honduras, Maldives, Mauritius, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Trinidad and Tobago

Argentina

Brazil

China

Ecuador

India

Paraguay

Uruguay

Venezuela
