



10th WTO Ministerial Conference, 15-18 December 2015, Nairobi

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Statement by State Secretary Marie-Gabrielle Ineichen-Fleisch, Switzerland

- Madame Chair, Cabinet Secretary Amina Mohamed;
Distinguished Ministers, dear Colleagues;
Director-General Roberto Azevêdo;
Honourable Delegates and Guests;
- Let me first thank wholeheartedly the Government and people of Kenya as well as you personally, Madame Chair, for hosting us so generously here in Nairobi for the 10th WTO Ministerial Conference.
- It is truly a historic moment to convene for the first WTO Ministerial Conference in Africa, home to forty-three Members of our Organization, twenty-one years after the WTO was born in Marrakesh.
- May I add that I am also very pleased that we will be welcoming two new Members during this Conference – Afghanistan and Liberia.

- Madame Chair, Switzerland is a very strong supporter of the Multilateral Trading System. We are proud to see what WTO Members have achieved during the Organization's first twenty years.
- Let me just mention the expansion of the Membership from 128 to 162, now covering 98% of world trade; the resolution of hundreds of trade disputes; new rules and commitments in areas such as trade facilitation, government procurement and information technology products; countless decisions and thorough monitoring in all areas of trade.
- The WTO has thus made major contributions to growth and development and to preventing protectionism.
- Madame Chair, we also know that a lot more needs to be done on the path towards a more prosperous and sustainable world, as set out by the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.
- Trade can and must be part of the solution.
- However, the economic recovery since the 2009 global crisis has overall been sluggish and trade expansion limited.

- I am convinced that a well-functioning Multilateral Trading System is crucial to make trade play its full role for development and prosperity.
- Madam Chair, Switzerland has come to Nairobi to contribute to a successful 10th Ministerial Conference.
- We have engaged constructively in negotiations on possible Nairobi outcomes, even where we are among the most exposed Members.
- This is particularly true for export competition in agriculture where we stand ready to do our part if others are willing to do so as well. As other Members we also need flexibility to implement our contribution to a balanced solution including all pillars of export competition.
- We welcome the advances made on LDC issues and look forward to decisions in this regard here in Nairobi.
- We also wish to underscore the importance of concluding the expansion of the Information Technology Agreement, the first market access agreement in WTO in 18 years.

- Such success should inspire Members engaged in the negotiation on an Environmental Goods Agreement to reach tangible results there soon as well.
- This leaves us with a big question – how to reach meaningful results through WTO beyond Nairobi?
- After 14 years of great efforts diverging perspectives on what would be required to deliver on outstanding Doha issues are threatening to block the way forward in multilateral trade negotiations.
- We strongly believe that such blockage should not be allowed to happen.
- Switzerland calls on all Members to engage, after the Nairobi Conference, in frank discussions on how to achieve further progress in the Multilateral Trading System.
- A failure to do so would have obvious consequences: more bilateral, regional, mega-regionals and plurilateral trade agreements. Such preferential approaches can bring real benefits to participating countries. But they are certainly not the best option if we want to make trade work for all.

- Madam Chair, the Nairobi Ministerial Conference is an opportunity to deliver concrete results for Members and the world economy. It is also a crucial moment for Members to reaffirm their commitment to the Multilateral Trading System and show their resolve to overcome current challenges.
- Thank you, Madam Chair.