



## **DECLARATION OF THE AFRICAN UNION INFORMAL MINISTERIAL MEETING ON THE TENTH WTO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE**

The following communication, dated 3 November 2015, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of Lesotho on behalf of the Africa Group.

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AU Trade Ministers met on 19 October 2015 in Brussels to consider the state of play of the DDA negotiations in preparation for MC10 to be held in Nairobi in December 2015. Ministers underscored that engagement in the MC10 process should be framed by the overriding priority accorded to Africa's industrial development in Agenda 2063 and other continental policy frameworks. Ministers took note of recent international agreements including the Addis Ababa Declaration on Financing for Development and the Post-2015 Development Agenda that reaffirmed the important role of trade in meeting internationally-agreed development objectives and targets and that development should be an integral component of all multilateral trade agreements.

### **1 ON THE OUTCOMES FROM THE NAIROBI MINISTERIAL**

#### **1.1 LDCs**

- i. Ministers agreed that the LDC Package must include binding commitments that will be commercially meaningful for Africa and must be more than a repetition of the promises made in Bali. It should include a substantive delivery of a package beyond the Bali promises. It must also not erode any of the trade preferences currently enjoyed by African countries.
- ii. Cotton must be addressed ambitiously, expeditiously and specifically in all three pillars of market access, domestic support and export competition.
- iii. Further, the work in favour of LDCs should continue in the post-MC10 period.

#### **1.2 Agriculture**

- i. The Rev.4 modalities should remain the basis for the agriculture negotiations as it enshrines the overall balance achieved after more than a decade of negotiations.
- ii. There should be enhanced accessibility to a flexible, easy to use Special Safeguard Mechanism in agriculture.
- iii. There should be a strengthening of the flexibilities accorded to Net Food Importing Developing Countries (NFIDCs).
- iv. Overall Trade Distorting support should be bound and reduced substantially by developed countries.
- v. On domestic support, there should be stricter disciplines on Green box measures to ensure that they are at most, minimally trade distorting.

- vi. There should also be a reduction in product specific *de minimis* of developed countries in accordance with Rev.4. There should also be limited and bound product specific Aggregate Measure of Support (AMS) in accordance with Rev 4 for developed countries.
- vii. There should be a permanent solution on public stockholding for food security purposes in accordance with the Bali Ministerial Decision and the General Council Decision of November 2014.
- viii. On Export Competition, while African countries can support an outcome that eliminates export subsidies, Ministers agreed to seek an outcome on food aid that ensures its provision addresses unintended consequences that damage national regional production in countries.

### 1.3 Development

- i. There should be binding outcomes in accordance with paragraph 44 of the Doha Ministerial Decision on the 25 S&D proposals advanced by the G90.
- ii. The strengthening of S&D provisions is in line with Africa's industrial development priorities as encapsulated in the Agenda 2063 and with the need to preserve adequate policy space.

### 1.4 TRIPS

- i. The transitional period under Article 66.1 of the TRIPS Agreement with respect to pharmaceutical products and the waivers from the obligations of Article 70.8 and 70.9 of the TRIPS Agreement should be extended for 30 years.
- ii. Ministers agreed that the Non Violation and Situation Complaints system is inapplicable under the TRIPs Agreement and will seek a permanent moratorium on this at MC10.

### 1.5 Accession

- i. For acceding African countries, there should be the principle of accelerating accession procedures without imposing onerous concessions and commitments.
- ii. In addition, technical support should be provided prior to and post accession to the acceding countries.

### 1.6 Fisheries

- i. There should be a tightening of the discipline on fisheries subsidies to ensure that those forms of subsidies do not promote overfishing and overcapacity.

### 1.7 Other Issues

- i. Concern was expressed that proposals on Transparency have yet to be received and that it will not be possible to accept any outcome that will involve implementation of any new and onerous administrative requirements or requirements that intrude into domestic policy making processes.

## 2 ON THE PROCESS LEADING UP TO MC10

2.1. Ministers emphasized willingness to engage with all Members to ensure a meaningful outcome from Nairobi.

2.2. Ministers agreed that the outcome from Nairobi should be a Ministerial Declaration with clear decisions on substantive priority issues with a strong development dimension.

2.3. Ministers emphasized that to deliver an agreed Ministerial Declaration by Nairobi, a transparent, participatory and inclusive drafting mechanism and process, with full and regular multilateral oversight, is needed.

2.4. Ministers insist that they are kept fully informed of the various iterations of the Declaration as it is developed.

### **3 ON THE FUTURE OF THE DOHA DEVELOPMENT ROUND**

3.1. Recalling the importance of the conclusion of the Doha Development Round to the African integration and industrialization agenda, the Ministers recognize that there is little prospect for a credible conclusion for the DDA at MC10. As such, they agreed that there must be a continuation of the negotiation beyond the Nairobi Ministerial within the DDA framework.

3.2. Ministers reaffirmed the negotiating mandates, developmental principles and objectives of the DDA.

3.3. Ministers reaffirmed the centrality of the principles of the single undertaking; less than full reciprocity; and Special and Differential Treatment (S&DT).

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