



**Ministerial Conference
Tenth Session
Nairobi, 15-18 December 2015**

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**MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE GROUP OF LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES
NAIROBI - KENYA**

MINISTERIAL COMMUNIQUE

The following communication, dated 16 December 2015, is being circulated at the request of the Delegation of Paraguay on behalf of the Landlocked Developing Countries.

We, the Ministers of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), having met on 16th December 2015 in Nairobi, Kenya, during the 10th Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization, reiterate the strong commitment of the Group of LLDCs to the Multilateral Trading System, especially on the framework of the negotiations of the Doha Development Agenda,

Recalling the Asuncion Platform for the Doha Development Round, adopted at the Meeting of Ministers of Landlocked Developing Countries Responsible for Trade on 10 August 2005 in Asuncion, Paraguay which articulates the common position of the Landlocked Developing countries for the ongoing negotiations of the Doha Development Round,

Recalling the Ministerial Meeting of the Group of LLDCs at the margin of the 9th Ministerial Conference of the WTO held in Bali, Indonesia, on 6 December 2013, in which LLDC's Ministers adopted a Ministerial Communiqué that raised outstanding issues concerning the participation of LLDCs in the multilateral trading system.

Recalling the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024, adopted in December 2014, which provides a comprehensive plan of action for the next decade to address the special challenges and needs of landlocked developing countries. We affirm our political commitment to implement this programme for sustainable development of our countries, with the support of development partners and transit countries, in the spirit of partnership and solidarity.

Recalling the meeting of Heads of State and Government and High Representatives of the 32 Landlocked Developing Countries, held in New York, on 28 September 2015, under the theme: "Linking Landlocked Developing Countries to Global Opportunities", during the 70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, and following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the 2015 United Nations Summit on the post-2015 development agenda.

Have adopted the following Ministerial Communiqué:

1. We call upon the WTO membership to strengthen the negotiation function of WTO and to reinvigorate work towards a successful conclusion of the Doha Development Round, with meaningful outcomes for developing countries and least developing countries. We insist that the post Nairobi scheme should be ambitious and development-centered.
2. In the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the World Trade Organization (WTO), we reaffirm our commitment to the Multilateral Trading System. International trade can play a major role in the promotion of economic development and the alleviation of poverty, especially through increasing market access and diminishing trade distortive measures.

3. In view of the continued hardships in international trade suffered by the landlocked developing countries, we stress the importance to have a specific Work Programme for LLDCs by the 11th Ministerial Conference. This Work Programme will address the special needs, challenges and vulnerabilities of LLDCs in order to increase their participation in the Multilateral Trading System. Key areas of work could be Trade Facilitation, Aid for Trade, Services, and Accession.
4. We call upon for a rapid ratification and implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement. We urge members to continue to provide technical, financial and capacity building assistance to LLDCs, on a sustainable basis, for the effective implementation of the future Agreement. We also call upon the constructive cooperation of transit countries for the effective and early application of disciplines that contribute to reducing transit time and costs, simplifying procedures and enhancing certainty in trans-border trade.
5. We emphasize the critical importance of Agriculture to the LLDCs economies. In this context, we attach importance to the continuation of the reform process in order to promote market access; reduction of distortive domestic support measures, especially in developed countries; the total elimination of all forms of export subsidies; and the promotion of fair rules for the cotton-sector will constitute an important tool for the promotion of economic activities and food security in developing countries.
6. We reiterate our request that development assistance provided in the context of the Aid for Trade initiative should consider the special needs and requirements of LLDCs. In that sense, we consider that future Aid for Trade work programmes should take into consideration the areas already targeted by the Vienna Programme of Action, emphasizing, among others, fundamental transit policy issues, infrastructure development and maintenance, and Regional Integration.
7. We stress the importance of ensuring close cooperation in the fundamental trade and transit issues between the LLDCs and the transit countries in line with the provisions of the WTO Agreements, including the Trade Facilitation Agreement.
8. We call for enhanced partnerships between the LLDCs and the transit countries, in cooperation with UN Agencies, international and regional financial organizations as well as the private and innovative finance mechanisms wherever appropriate, in matters related to raising the trade efficiency of LLDCs through construction and improvement of multi-modal transport connectivity.
9. We reiterate the necessity to mainstream the Vienna Programme of Action in the international, regional and national planning processes by ensuring adequate means commensurate with the development needs of the LLDCs.
10. We reiterate that the principle of Special and Differential (S&D) treatment represents one of the cornerstones of the WTO Agreements. We believe that the reaffirmation of this principle should be an integral part of any package and of the work of the organization. Therefore, we call for the strengthening of the provisions that implement the principle in order to make it more precise, effective and operational.
11. We also urge Members to take into account the special needs and problems caused by the geographical disadvantage of being landlocked that during the accession process of LLDCs to the WTO. As such, the accession process for LLDCs should be further simplified and these countries should be provided with adequate technical and financial assistance.
12. We recognize the significant contribution to the strengthening of the multilateral trading system of the LLDCs that acceded under Article XII of the Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the WTO. For a balanced outcome of trade liberalization negotiations, we stress the need to take into account the extensive commitments undertaken by the Article XII Members upon their accession to the WTO.
13. We welcome the recent accession of Kazakhstan to the WTO, which will be participating in the MC10 as a Member for the first time, as well as the completion of WTO accession negotiations of Afghanistan.

14. We call on and encourage all LLDCs to ratify the Multilateral Agreement for the Establishment of an International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries, in order to bring it into full operation for the benefit of all LLDC members.
15. We express our sincere appreciation to the government of Kenya and its people for their warm hospitality and for hosting the 10th WTO Ministerial Conference in Nairobi successfully.
