



**STATEMENT**

**BY**

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**DEPUTY MINISTER OF COMMERCE, TRADE AND INDUSTRY**

**AT**

**THE FIFTH MEETING OF TRADE MINISTERS OF LANDLOCKED  
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

**GENEVA, SWITZERLAND**

**CENTRE WILLIAM RAPPARD, WTO – ROOM W**

**23-24 JUNE, 2016**

**Session Title:** *“Enhancing Implementation of the Trade and Development Agendas for the LLDCs, the Vienna Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”*

*[Please check against delivery]*

**Honourable Ministers,**

**Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya, High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States,**

**Mr. Roberto Azevêdo, Director General, WTO,**

**Excellencies Ambassadors and Heads of Mission,**

**Distinguished Delegates**

**Ladies and gentlemen**

May I begin by expressing gratitude to the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, and the WTO Secretariat for joining efforts in hosting this meeting of Trade Ministers of the Landlocked Developing Countries.

I also wish to thank the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands for their contribution towards the successful organisation of this meeting.

May I also thank the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries for keeping trade high on the LLDC agenda as part of our collective efforts to ensure that we do not lose track of what we committed to do in Vienna in November 2014.

Further, I wish to thank the LLDC group for re-electing Zambia to chair the New York chapter of the LLDCs group for two years (2016 to 2017) and Bhutan, Bolivia, Mongolia, Niger and Rwanda who have been elected to the Bureau. Zambia's re-election is a sign of appreciation and confidence in our leadership, which my delegation holds in high esteem.

My delegation looks forward to working with the Bureau and the members of the LLDC group in actualising the action points in the Vienna Programme programme of Action. Certainly, we do need the support of our cooperating partners in implementing this programme.

**Honourable Ministers, ladies and gentlemen,**

I am pleased to note that this session is focussed on trade and development in the context of the Vienna Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.

For LLDCs, enhancing trade is one of the key priorities identified to unlock the development potential of our economies. As agreed in the Vienna Programme of Action, greater integration of LLDCs into world trade and global value chains is vital for increasing their competitiveness and ensuring that our countries attain sustained economic development.

The 2030 agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda also recognize the significance of trade to poverty reduction and inclusive growth.

The question is, how do we actualise these commitments and ensure that the current scenario where LLDCs only account for a meagre one percent of global export trade is changed so that this category of countries join the high fliers and begin to play an important role in global trade.

It cannot be business as usual. We need transformative ideas and this can only be achieved through collective efforts. I am therefore pleased to note that the panel for this session is composed of representatives from various institutions, including those that have a focussed agenda on championing trade for development in developing countries.

It is the expectation of the LLDC Group that each of your respective institutions have mainstreamed action points outlined in various global commitments on LLDCs, including the Vienna programme of action and the 2013 Agenda for sustainable development in your strategic plans with clear measurable milestones.

Our interest, as LLDCs, is to ensure that bottlenecks that impede the growth of our economies get the attention they deserve in national,

regional and multilateral programmes. Among issues of focus should be the reversal of trends in global prices of commodities. It is a known fact that most LLDCs are dependent on commodities for their export earnings and the recent down turn in prices has had negative impact on the growth of our economies. Programmes focussed on value addition, market diversification and addressing distortions caused by subsidies are key to reversing this trend.

We therefore look forward to the implementation of commitments made in the context of the Aid for Trade initiative and the outcomes of the 10<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference held in Nairobi in December, 2015.

In addition, as a Group, we are keen to see to it that the International Think Tank becomes fully operational as this will provide top-quality research on trade-related topics including on WTO negotiations as well as provide evidence-based advocacy on issues of interest and benefit to landlocked developing countries. I therefore call upon Members of the LLDC Group that have not yet done so, to ratify the Multilateral Agreement on the establishment of the International Think Tank for the LLDCs.

Similarly, there is an urgent need to address the cost of trade through implementation of trade facilitating measures. LLDCs are challenged by lack of direct territorial access to the sea, remoteness and isolation from world markets.

As such, transport costs for most LLDCs have continued to be a major hindrance towards attaining full trade potential. In 2014, the average cost for such countries to export and import a standardized container was \$3,443 and \$4,343, respectively, compared with \$1,301 and \$1,559 for transit developing countries.

May I state that the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement sets an important basis for addressing trade facilitation challenges. The implementation of the contents of this Agreement should be complemented by initiatives aimed at addressing infrastructure related challenges for tangible results and impact.

I am happy to report that Zambia presented the instrument of acceptance on 16 December 2015. As the TFA will only enter into force once two-thirds of the WTO membership has formally accepted the Agreement, I urge all LLDCs that have not yet done so to urgently present their instruments of acceptance.

Another aspect requiring our attention is the need to make trade growth more inclusive in order to halt the marginalization of LLDCs in world trade. Our immediate task should be focused on finding the best way to integrate our small and medium enterprises to regional and global value chains without perpetuating the current marginalization and imbalances in global trade gains. Interventions

by institutions such as UNCTAD and ITC are critical in this regard. We need our people to appreciate the benefits associated with trading globally.

**Honourable Ministers, ladies and gentlemen,**

Nationally, as Zambia we have embarked on a number of initiatives aimed at market expansion and product development in an effort to enhance trade and diversify the economy, these include following:

- We are promoting the establishment of core venture clusters through collaboration with major private investors whose investments are expected to bring about opportunities for both forward and backward linkages along the value chains. Government, through institutions such as the Zambia Development Agency and the Citizens Economic Empowerment Commission is providing both technical and financial support to build the capacity of Small and Medium Enterprises to take advantage of these opportunities to supply goods and services to these Core Venture Companies.
- We are also implementing the product Value Chain Cluster Development programme to facilitate rural industrialisation. The Government undertook a primary resource mapping in all the ten provinces of the country and arising from this resource

mapping, it identified products for which it is providing a whole range of support from production development to packaging and final sale. Currently, through this programme, Government is funding more than 1,700 projects countrywide, with unprecedented outreach to rural areas, women and youth.

- We have enhanced trade facilitation through creation of One Stop Border Posts and recently, launched the National Electronic Single Window. The establishment of an OSBP at Chirundu border has significantly reduced the transit time for cross the border trade with trucks now taking less than 2 hours to clear the border.
- At regional level, Zambia is an active participant in regional integration and cooperation efforts in COMESA and SADC aimed at facilitating trade and industrial development. Zambia is also a key participant in the COMESA-SADC-EAC Tripartite framework that is anchored on market integration, industrial development and infrastructure development.
- It is clear the regional arrangements that Zambia aligns itself to are consistent with the aspirations of the Vienna Programme of Action as regional integration is being seen, at the minimum, as a three dimensional undertaking that includes trade integration but also seeks to support the establishment and growth of industries and infrastructure development that are all critical to



the structural transformation of land locked developing countries.

In conclusion, I believe that national leadership coupled with stronger partnerships and sustained cooperation from bilateral, regional and international partners will enable LLDCs to achieve the Vienna Programme of Action and other global agendas such as the 2030 agenda.

**I thank you.**