







WTO ACCESSIONS AND THE MULTILATERAL TRADING SYSTEM

Opening Ceremony of the High Level Session

MONDAY, 14 DECEMBER 2015 AT 9:00

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HE President Kenyatta,
Director General,
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to Kenya for the Fourth China Round Table and the WTO's Tenth Ministerial Conference. I wish you all a productive and successful time here in Nairobi.

I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Government of Kenya, to once again express my gratitude to the WTO Secretariat and the People's Republic of China for their assistance in organising this event the Fourth China Round Table.

This Round Table is taking place at an important time for the WTO. As you know, MC10 is the first Ministerial Conference to take place in Africa and marks the organisation's 20th anniversary.

The first China Round Table on the African Continent is a unique opportunity to improve such understanding as well as providing a platform for the continued integration of Africa into the global economy.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In order to strengthen international trade in order to support sustainable development, efforts are needed to ensure the efficient use of domestic resources, building human capacity and strengthening national institutions.

In Africa, this also means that further emphasis is needed to provide a supportive investment climate which is able to integrate our Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) into global value chains. These enterprises play a critical role in job creation, poverty reduction and export diversification.

As global markets shift and new opportunities present themselves, we must continually adapt in order to achieve successful sustainable development outcomes. In Kenya, for instance, we have the Green Economy Strategy and Implementation Plan which has now become part of our medium-term plan for 2013-2017. In this vein, we are also working to improve e-commerce as part of Kenya's Vision 2030 which seeks to mainstream e-Trade within our overall economy.

I hope these discussions will prompt thinking about the opportunities and challenges that WTO membership presents for Africa, as well as the

are able to deliver in the coming days will be crucial to the role of the WTO as a forum for trade negotiations over the coming years.

I have been telling you, my distinguished colleagues, that I will do everything within my power to ensure that MC10 is a success, for Kenya, for Africa and for every WTO Member. Even if it means continuing the negotiations late into the night and confronting some of the most challenging issues in front of this organisation.

We cannot allow the WTO to lose its significance. At stake are important advancements in eliminating agricultural and fishery subsidies, measures to benefit the LDCs and enhancing the transparency function of the organisation.

However, the most important issue which must absolutely be solved is how do we the Members, reinvigorate the WTO's negotiating function.

The WTO is a system we have all invested in, both through the lengthy accession processes for those recently acceded Members and through the continued engagement of the founding Members.

Allowing the WTO to sink into irrelevance serves no one, least of all those most in need of economic development.

I urge all Members present to work with me, as Chair, this week for a successful and balanced outcome for MC10.

Thank you.