

The Honorable Michael Froman
United States Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20508

December 11, 2015

Dear Ambassador Froman,

While we recognize the complexity of the many issues being negotiated in the lead up to the December 15-18, 2015 Nairobi Ministerial of the World Trade Organization (WTO), as faith, development and food policy organizations, we especially want to weigh in on issues related to global food security. We should learn from the 2008 food price crisis, as well as the persistent rounds of price volatility that have followed. These problems will be exacerbated by climate change, financialization of agricultural commodities, and competing demands (especially among crops used for food, fuel or feed) that make it hard for the poorest countries to rely on trade for an affordable supply of basic grains. We urge you to:

Support developing country efforts to confront volatility in international markets for agricultural goods. The WTO Agreement on Agriculture failed to provide workable proposals to end dumping or import surges. As a starting point, the U.S. should support a functional Special Safeguard Mechanism, without making that support dependent on other concessions on market access. The surges are a documented reality under the current rules, not a prospective risk should further market access be granted.

Agree to a permanent decision on the G33 proposal regarding food stocks programs to support food security that allows developing countries to provide support to small scale farmers and poor consumers, while keeping in mind the need for rules that restrict every country from dumping excess supplies in external markets. Several of the groups listed below weighed in on this in a letter to the White House dated October 15, 2015.

Agree to the revision of the baseline figures on public spending on agriculture so that they reflect current prices and are sufficiently flexible to cope with differing levels of inflation. Countries

More generally, we urge you to support a transparent and inclusive multilateral process to resolve these pressing issues. U.S. trade policy should enhance countries' rights to feed their peoples. It should not advance negotiations that leave most countries out of decisions that they then may have to adopt as a fait accompli at a later time. Many of us have expressed serious concerns