

**Tenth WTO Ministerial Conference
Accession of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan**

Statement by the Russian Federation

Madam Chair,
Distinguished Ministers,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Russian Federation let me congratulate the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on this important day.

It has been a long road and it has not always been easy. Indeed, the accession process has taken 11 years. But that just underlines how much work has been done and what an achievement you have reached.

The WTO accession process provides a platform for domestic reforms, which are necessary for all countries to grow, develop and prosper. As a result, WTO Members design their economic, trade and investment policies within a stable, predictable, and

As with the accession of the Republic of Liberia yesterday, the accession of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan comes at an important moment. Both accessions represent a vote of confidence in the WTO and the multilateral trading system. Together with the accession of Kazakhstan, they are the biggest highlights of the work of the WTO in 2015.

To the Government and people of Afghanistan I give a warm welcome to the WTO.

Thank you.