

Statement of
H.E. Mounir Fakhry Abdel Nour
Minister of Trade and Industry, Egypt
Accession of the Republic of Yemen to the WTO
WTO Ninth Ministerial Conference
Bali - Indonesia
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Thank You Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the Arab Group, we warmly welcome the accession of the Republic of Yemen, to become the 160th Member State in the World Trade Organization. We congratulate the Government of Yemen and the Yemeni people on successfully completing one of the most complicated accession processes and satisfying the requirements of WTO Membership, after over 13-years period of negotiations, and following eleven formal meetings and many informal consultations. We commend the political commitment by the Yemeni Government to expedite its accession process and wish Yemen all the success.

The benefits of this accession to the WTO are not limited to Yemen, but extends to other nations. The lowering of tariffs, along with the liberalization of investment will: Create an atmosphere that will attract more investors into the Yemeni market, facilitate its development and diversification of its economy, and at the same time allow foreign businesses and investors to profit from this process. Undoubtly, another important milestone on strengthening the Multilateral Trading System, while increasing its transparency and ensuring its universal nature.

Mr. Chairman,

As we welcome today a new Least Developed Country, we should as well draw the lessons learnt and reflect on what we can do more to assist our trading partners who are still in the process of accession. The process of accession to the WTO has indeed become an extremely difficult process, especially for LDCs. Latest statistics show that we have 23 accessions in progress among them six Arab countries, which include 2 Arab LDCs.

Let us spare no effort to continue improving the procedures to simplify the accession process and enhance the existing institutional mechanisms including clarifying the definition of transparent rules for the implementation of the provisions of Article 12 of the WTO Agreement. The objective is to provide the opportunity to acceding countries to express their views on the accession process, and always avail WTO technical assistance and capacity building prior to and during the accession process, according to their needs and developmental priorities.

I thank you.