



**Ministerial Conference
Ninth Session
Bali, 3-6 December 2013**

**OPENING SESSION
3 DECEMBER 2013
ADDRESS BY MR ROBERTO AZEVEDO
DIRECTOR-GENERAL**

Let me once again pay tribute to the government and people of Indonesia for hosting this Ninth Session of the WTO's Ministerial Conference.

And to Minister Gita Wirjawan and your dedicated team for your hard work in setting the stage for this occasion.

I also want to take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to those who have joined the WTO since the last Ministerial Conference in 2011.

- **not delivering on growth and opportunities;**
- **and not delivering for the developing world.**

Or, we can seize the opportunity we have here to move towards a strengthened, vibrant global

And, at the same time, trade patterns and practices are forever evolving.

Customs modernisation and upgrading alone may not be sufficient to integrate developing countries and LDCs into global patterns of supply. But it is clearly an indispensable and necessary step.

And, indeed, developing countries would stand to gain the most. It is estimated that we could see an expansion in their exports of up to 10% – compared to a 4.5% expansion in developed countries.

It is significant that there is not, in this pillar or in the package as a whole, a developed versus developing divide.

Agriculture

Next, the agriculture pillar.

Agriculture is a cornerstone of the Doha Development Agenda – these issues are very dear to developing countries.

And in this area our package also delivers important outcomes.

The texts we brought from Geneva would set us on track for a reform of export subsidies and measures of similar effect, and it would provide for better implementation of tariff rate quota commitments.

Both of these measures would potentially have very positive effects in boosting agricultural trade, and in setting the stage for future negotiations.

The agriculture pillar would also provide temporary protection for food security programs under which countries stockpile grain for distribution to the poor.

In certain developing countries these programs run the risk of legal action where they exceed agreed subsidy limits.

So the text we brought from Geneva would not only provide this temporary shelter from legal action but, more importantly, it would put in place a work program to find a permanent solution to this issue.

Development

Finally, the development pillar.

Here, a monitoring mechanism would provide for the review and strengthening of special and differential treatment provisions, which are contained in all WTO multilateral texts. This is a vital achievement for developing and least-developed countries.

There are also a series of specific measures here to support the least-developed countries.

This includes reforms that would enable services providers in LDCs to enjoy new export opportunities in developed country markets.

There are steps that would simplify rules of origin requirements which would, again, open up new export opportunities for the LDCs.

Under this pillar we would also see improvements in trade preference arrangements which extend duty-free-quota-free treatment to LDC exports.

And, finally, we would see a commitment from WTO members to enhance the productive capacity

Assessment of Progress

So this is how far we have come.

The good news is that we have a package of extremely significant issues on the table which would represent a huge success if it can be finalised here.

The bad news is that these are not fully agreed texts.

There are still some issues to be resolved.

This is a single package – you can't remove a pillar, or even a brick from a pillar, without bringing the whole edifice down.

We failed to find full convergence in Geneva. We came truly close to a successful outcome but we didn't quite get there.

Ministers have a chance to change this.

What's at stake

By failing to deliver this package we would fail businesses around the world.

We would fail the unemployed and the underemployed.

We would fail the poor, we would fail those who rely on food security schemes, we would fail developing country farmers, we would fail developing country cotton growers, and we would fail the least-developed economies as a whole.

And that is just through the loss of this Bali package.

When you look beyond that, the cost is even greater.

What's at stake is the ability of this institution to support growth and development – the contribution we make to the lives of people on the street around the world.

What's at stake is the cause of multilateralism itself.

The multilateral trading system was never the only option for trade negotiations. It always co-existed with, and benefited from, other arrangements. The multilateral trading system was never the only option for trade negotiations. It always co-existed with, and benefited from, other arrangements.

Members want a deal.

Well, now it's time to deliver.

Conclusion

A successful outcome is still possible.

We made a lot of progress so far – and we are almost there. We are almost at the finish line.

What halted our work in Geneva was not a lack of effort or a lack of commitment – rather it was a few, very limited, specific and localised issues that require political calls to overcome – political calls of a nature that we simply cannot make in Geneva.

This is what the next few days are about. That's why we're here.