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Statement by H.E. Mr António Martins Da Cruz
Minister for Foreign Affairs

Allow me first of all, on behalf of my delegation, to express my gratitude to the Government and people of Mexico for the warm welcome and hospitality that have been accorded us since our arrival in this beautiful city of Cancún.

I would also like to avail myself of this opportunity to thank Dr Supachai the Director-General of WTO and Ambassador Carlos Pérez del Castillo, Chairman of the General Council for their tireless efforts during the preparatory period.

This Ministerial Meeting offers all Members an unique opportunity to prove how much we are determined to strengthen the multilateral trading system and how much we are aware of its important contribution to reduce international uncertainty and instability world-wide, at a time when it is most needed.

For the sake of global economy and global governance, Cancún should be able to give a strong political signal on the principles we should preserve – the level of ambition decided in Doha, the single undertaking and an outcome of negotiations positive for both developed and developing countries.

Our assessment is that an important work was done on the substance and on clarification of positions. But our task goes beyond a mid-term review of the negotiations. This meeting should provide solutions for moving forward in all difficult issues, allowing us to maintain the level of ambition agreed upon in Doha. In a word, to create momentum for a successful conclusion of the negotiations next year.

We are committed to work towards the sustainable integration of developing countries in the multilateral system, providing greater market opportunities based on balanced rules.

This approach agreed in Doha is indeed a big challenge for the WTO. We want to increase market opportunities and strengthen multilateral rules, clarifying the existing ones but also promoting a broader rule making dimension, extending it to new areas such as investment, competition, trade facilitation and transparency on public procurement. We expect that a decision in this regard can be taken, as agreed in Doha.

One of the most important issues of this Doha Development Agenda, long awaited, is the multilateral compromise on TRIPS and Public Health, now agreed by all WTO Members. We realize the importance of finding a solution that should provide a better access of poor people to medicines. We welcome the deal that is a key element in the fight against communicable diseases.

