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Statement Circulated by The Hon. Dr. Emmanuel O. Udogu,
Minister of Commerce and Tourism

On behalf of the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, I offer you our sincerest and warmest congratulations on your election to the Chairmanship of this second session of the Ministerial Conference of

and, to that end, underscoring our determination to implement our obligations.

Second, our concerns with the uneven distribution of the benefits, the marginalization of countries and the slow pace of integration, the limitations and the insufficiency of S and D provisions for addressing these problems are sources of instability to the structure of the trading system. They must be managed.

Third, the urgent and vital necessity of strengthening the WTO Agreements, in the work of the Secretariat, and in the multilateral integration of the development dimension in the work of the WTO, and the recognition that, although trade is the major engine of growth and prosperity, trade and prosperity is not automatic unless this relationship is mediated by formally adopted and applied developmental policies. In this regard,

Fourth, greater reality and meaning have to be accorded to cooperation pursuant to Article III(5) of the WTO Agreement. Beyond the maintenance of each other, the three Organizations namely, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), and the World Trade Organization (WTO), should now combine in a manner to address the problems of countries interactively and coherently under the Charter. The response to the crisis in the currency and capital markets, the results of the delivery of integrated technical assistance to the least-developed countries, and the continuing trade-related economic problems of many developing countries, very clearly the requirement for meaningful economic policy coherence between the IMF and the WTO, and the IMF for integrating trade, development and financial policies. This economic coherence may require the creation of a new over-arching

Fifth, the urgent necessity for the Organization to assist African countries for effective participation in the dispute settlement system of the WTO, and to take appropriate measures to rectify the anomaly of the virtual absence

integration into the multilateral trading system will be accelerated by increased market access in specific areas of export interest to our countries.

Nigeria like other developing countries is emphasizing the need for implementation of the existing WTO Agreements taking into consideration our experiences, difficulties, as well as aspirations. Implementation problems such as realigning national laws in line with the WTO Agreements, lack of technical expertise, lack of market access, imposition of tariff and non-tariff barriers, SPS considerations, problems of capacity building, among others are issues of concern to my country which should be addressed. Nigeria's position is that the above named implementation issues should be given greater attention rather than rushing into or undertaking new ones, without prejudice to the continuation of discussion of the Built-In-Agenda items.

Nigeria continues to attach importance to securing the inflow of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into our economy in order to increase the capital base, access to modern technology, and expertise, all of which are required for the country's accelerated economic development. This is why we have accorded great interest to the exchange of information and educational process that is taking place in the Working Group on Trade and Investment. It is our hope that work will continue in a paced manner, that the agenda will be comprehensive and balanced and will take account of the concerns of all countries and all interests, including those who consider that investments should undertake environmental impact assessments and be environment-friendly in order to ensure sustainability of trade and development.

The WTO will become universally relevant and central to global economic policy coherence when those countries which are undergoing accession negotiations become Members of the Organization. Therefore, it is necessary to accelerate these accession negotiations, applying the similar entry standards, rights and obligations to all applicants. In our view, it is necessary that the same standards, rights and obligations apply to all, taking account of the Organizations' positions on the need to recognize different

are used as non-tariff barriers. We welcome the work in the past three and half years in the Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE) in which Nigeria has participated most actively through the presentation of papers and formal reactions to proposals by other delegations. We urge the CTE to continue with its analysis of the complexities of trade and environment relationships with a view to proposing recommendations, at the appropriate time, for the consideration of the Organization as a whole, when found necessary.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, the purpose and the objectives of the WTO are clearly contained in the Preamble to the Marrakesh Agreement. Pursuant to that Preamble, Nigeria emphasizes the necessity of incorporating the development dimension in the work of the Organization and in the work of the Secretariat. If the Organization is relevant in directly assisting our countries to address the challenges to development, increase in employment, reduction of poverty, elimination of marginalization, and the pursuit of optimally sustainable development policies while, at the same time, accelerating the increase in our national incomes and prosperity, then our expectations of this Organization would have been met. The Organization has begun with assisting our countries in achieving these goals, but so much more needs to be done with creativity, with vision, and robust imagination.
