

REMARKS BY VICE CHANCELLOR, PROF.PETER F.M.MBITHI DURING
REGIONAL DIALOGUE ON WTO ACCESSIONS FOR THE GREATER HORN OF
AFRICA ON 28TH AUGUST 2017 AT THE HOTEL CONTINENTAL

AMB. AMINA MOHAMEED, CABINET SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
MS. MAIKA OSHIKAWA, OFFICER IN CHARGE OF WTO ACCESSIONS,
HEADS OF DELEGATIONS,
JOSHUA OIGARA,
THE GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
KCB -GROUP
YOUR EXELLENCIES, THE AMBASSADORS
DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I am delighted to join you on this important forum which has brought together delegates from regional countries to have a dialogue on the WTO accessions for the greater horn of Africa.

Let me start by acknowledging that Globalization has caused tremendous and irreversible changes in the national and international economies. Trade driven by globalization has reached unprecedented pace, scope, and scale, and spawned new opportunities and realities.

We have continued to witness exponential expansion of trade flows and increased integration of our economies. But we have also experienced some challenges which I believe have not dampened our firm belief in the Multilateral trading system.

Globalization has bequeathed mammoth opportunities in International trade but unlike other continents Africa is yet to celebrate rapid development from globalization and International trade. The complexity of international trade regimes is somewhat to blame for the seeming disconnect between international trade and national development. It is incumbent upon WTO to debunk these fears by promoting equity and fairness in international trade and development.

The Focus of international actors and policy makers like you should be to work with WTO to achieve a balance between maximizing the dividends of international trade and minimizing its economic, social, human and environmental costs.

The University of Nairobi is ready to make its contribution using both theoretical and empirical research approaches to articulate issues confronting multi-lateral trading system and generate useful knowledge that can help nations to work together in reaping the benefits of international trade using their comparative advantages.

I believe we can work together with WTO and other state actors present here to address these challenges through capacity building,, research and reporting and through outreach programs by articulating our regional perspectives to the rest of the world and influencing national policy adaptations to WTO

Ladies and Gentlemen

The Participation of the University of Nairobi in the preparation for this very important dialogue is attestation of our faith in the multilateral trading system

We believe that with more countries acceding to WTO, we shall more see reduction in tariffs and non tariff barriers (NTBS) to trade, increased market access, non-discrimination in trade, transparency and predictability enhanced in this era of globalization.

The University of Nairobi has been collaborating with various international organizations and universities since its inception. We maintain robust links and collaborations with various institutions in research and consultancy, capacity building, staff and student exchange programs, curriculum development, and dissemination of research findings. The international institutions that the University has entered into memorandum of understanding include the UNCTAD, WTO and the United Nations University (UNU).

Our School of Economics in collaboration with WTO has been instrumental in coordinating various training programs in Regional Trade Policy for the English speaking Africa countries successfully.

Towards the end of 2009, the School of Economics was awarded the WTO Chair for the Eastern Africa region thus further strengthening our relationship. We therefore extend our sincere gratitude to the World Trade Organization secretariat in Geneva for their support and look forward to continue strengthening our partnership.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Kenya is one of the founder members of WTO having joined in 1995 and even hosted the Tenth WTO Ministerial Conference (MC10) held in Nairobi, Kenya in

December 2015 which was the first WTO ministerial conference held on the African continent. Since the Ministerial Conference, several African countries have reaffirmed their commitment to accede to the WTO including the Comoros, Ethiopia, South Sudan and Somalia. Three of these countries, South Sudan, Somalia and Ethiopia are in the process of WTO accession.

It is on this premise and the recent impetus generated by African Acceding Governments that a regional dialogue on WTO accessions for the Greater Horn of Africa is timely and could contribute to regional integration efforts as well as the region's integration into the global economy.

The acceding countries are Kenya's immediate neighbors and we expect to see more cross border trade in goods and services, and increased demand for skilled human resources. The University of Nairobi is ready to play its rightful role of training requisite manpower for our region.

We are proud that we have continued to produce the most competitive graduates in the region in many disciplines including Law, Economics and diplomacy.

We expect that with more countries acceding to WTO, this will boost growth and development and increase stability in the global economy of which Kenya is part of.

The University of Nairobi is proud to be identified with the WTO and the acceding countries. I take this opportunity therefore to warmly welcome all of you and wish you the best outcomes during the three days of your deliberations.

Thank you.

