



WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

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Director-General

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Dear Colleague,

Thank you for registering to attend the 9th WTO Ministerial Conference. We look forward to having a very strong NGO and business presence in Bali. Almost 350 organizations and more than 650 individuals have signed up for MC9, half of them from developing countries and almost 40% from Asia.

Since the day I took office, I have worked day and night to help WTO Members negotiate a Bali package. Hundreds of hours of work in meetings involving all WTO Members brought us very close to success, but were not able to cross the finish line. At the General Council on 26 November I listened very closely to the Membership and what I heard was encouraging. Virtually all WTO Members said we have come too far and worked too hard to let the package fail. I heard many suggestions and I have given consideration to them all.

What struck me most however, was the passion that was shown by all sides. The Group of Least-Developed Countries, the African Group and the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group were unequivocal in that we should not let a potential deal – one that offers real development opportunities now and in the future – wither and die. These are countries for which the WTO represents the best chance at integration into the global economy. But the developed countries were just as positive and just as vocal. It is clear that this package is not about developed versus developing countries – it is about all countries working together for mutual benefit.

Success would secure the future of the Doha Development Round and the multilateral trading system itself. There is a great deal at stake here – and there is a great deal on the table in the Bali package:

- Measures on "Trade Facilitation" which would deliver jobs and opportunities in times of unemployment and slow growth, while also delivering technical assistance and capacity building for the better integration of developing and least-developed countries into the global economy.
- Specific measures to support the least-developed countries, such as: improvements in duty-free-quota-free market access schemes; simplified and more accessible rules of origin for their exports; improved market access for the services sector; and a renewed push for negotiations on cotton.
- A mechanism for the review and strengthening of special and differential treatment provisions (which are vital for developing and least-developed countries) in all WTO agreements.

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- Some very significant agricultural issues which would: set us on track for a reform of export subsidies and measures of similar effect; provide for a better implementation of tariff rate quota commitments; and provide a temporary shelter for food security programs while also putting in place a work program to find a permanent solution.


Failure in Bali would sacrifice all this. We would be failing the business community and, above all, the most vulnerable among us. The remaining obstacles are very few, well defined and not difficult to solve if we have political engagement and political will. That is what we are looking to Ministers in Bali this week to provide. A successful outcome is still possible.

The agenda at the Ministerial Conference promises to be very full. Therefore, my opportunities to meet with you directly and discuss these matters in person may be limited. If this proves to be the case then I will try to make up for it in 2014.

I am pleased that we can offer you a fully-equipped and modern NGO Centre. It provides meeting facilities, working space and briefing areas. This is your centre and I encourage you to use it according to your needs and preferences. My colleagues will be there to help and assist you in whatever way they can. Details for the NGO centre can be found on the WTO's dedicated MC9 website (which is accessible via www.wto.org). The MC9 website also contains a special NGO page where you can find relevant and up-to-date conference information.

I hope you enjoy the conference.

Yours sincerely,



Roberto Azevêdo