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EGYPT

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Government of Switzerland for their hospitality and efforts in organizing this important conference. I also thank the Republic of Kazakhstan for chairing our Twelfth Ministerial Conference.

I would also like to express my appreciation to all members, the Director General and the WTO secretariat for their hard work over the years following the establishment of our Organization, and particularly the last few years, which were marked by major challenges and crises. Such challenges have proved that the Multilateral Trading System is necessary to maintain well-functioning trade relations among our countries with a view to achieving our sustainable development goals and raising the standards of living of our people.

We strongly believe that the main aim of our meeting is to restore the credibility of the system and to reiterate our strong belief that the multilateral trading system is still relevant and resilient enough to respond to the challenges faced by our World today whether they are health, economic or geopolitical challenges and crises. We need to reach effective and concrete outcomes that help us overcome the impact of current challenges and enhance our readiness to face future crises. We need to work together to ensure a fair, inclusive and rules based multilateral trading system.

To this end, Egypt stresses the importance of maintaining development at the heart of any outcome and to give due consideration to the needs of developing and least developed countries hit hardest by the current global challenges; this will help us all achieve a quick and sustainable economic recovery.

As per our agenda for MC12:

The current global challenges stipulate that we give priority to outcomes that ensure:

- The availability and accessibility to vaccines, therapeutics and medical supplies at affordable prices and on equitable basis.
- Mitigating the impact of the food security crisis in all our countries and in particular Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Net food Importing Developing Countries (NFIDCs) already suffering from strained food conditions in a manner that threatens the livelihood of its citizens and producers.

A decision on the **TRIPs waiver** is of paramount importance to help achieve equitable access to vaccines, diagnostics and treatments in order to overcome the impact of the pandemic. We also need to stress the importance of technology transfer to developing countries and least developed countries with a view to enhancing their productive, technological and scientific capacities related to public health threats.

In this regard, I would like to seize this opportunity to commend the efforts of member countries to reach a TRIPs outcome even though it is a partial one. I would also like to commend the bilateral efforts of our trading partners in this respect.

The global food security crisis we are witnessing and living today demonstrates the centrality of the Agricultural negotiations. It is our priority to reach fair and development-oriented outcomes in agriculture negotiations, that would contribute to facing the pressing problem of food insecurity by giving priority to already mandated issues, including a permanent solution to public stockholding for food security purposes, a special safeguard mechanism for developing countries, as well as correcting the long standing imbalances in the Domestic Support pillar.

Furthermore, developing countries in particular NFIDCS and LDCs need to be accorded the appropriate policy space and tools to enable them to enhance their local production of strategic agricultural goods in a manner that is consistent with WTO rules.

In this context, I would like to urge all members to positively consider the adoption of the Draft Ministerial Decision on "WTO Response to Food insecurity in NFIDCs and LDCs" circulated at the request of Egypt in document WT/GC/W/847. The draft decision comprises two major pillars:

First, the establishment of a work program to improve the operational effectiveness of Marrakesh Decision of April 1994 tackling a number of issues including *inter alia*: the trade related aspects of an international compensatory financing mechanism to finance normal levels of food imports of NFIDCs and LDCs, in addition to providing policy space for NFIDCs and LDCs to pursue their rural development, agricultural transformation and livelihood objectives.

Second, allowing NFIDCs and LDCs the flexibility to exceed their de minimis levels in the Agreement on Agriculture under certain conditions and for a limited period of time.

On **fisheries subsidies negotiations**, Egypt is confident that as members we are capable of reaching an agreement that fulfils the mandate of SDG 14.6 and provides special and differential treatment that takes into account the developmental needs of developing countries. The agreement should be balanced in terms of members' rights and obligations.

I would like to reiterate that the sustainable recovery of the global economy requires enabling developing countries to build more resilient economic structures based on economic diversification and further integration into the multilateral trading system. This necessitates the review of all special and Differential treatment provisions with a view of strengthening them and making them more precise, effective and operational in accordance with the mandate of paragraph 44 of the Doha Development Agenda.

Last but not least, we need to agree in MC12 on launching a dialogue on **the WTO's reform agenda**, in which priority shall be given to finding an immediate solution to the appellate body impasse. This reform agenda shall identify the future work of the WTO in accordance with the principles and objectives of the WTO agreements, and it must be a fair and balanced agenda that takes due consideration of the challenges facing developing and least developed countries, as well as their ideas and proposals on reform.

Let me conclude by reaffirming Egypt's commitment to the Multilateral trading system and our readiness to engage constructively with all members to restore the credibility of the system and the pivotal role of the WTO amid such unprecedented challenges.

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