

**Statement delivered by Bangladesh on behalf of the LDCs at Ambassadorial level meeting of LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS on WTO trade negotiations in the context of the Eleventh WTO Ministerial Conference (MC-11) with DDG of WTO organized by the UNOHRLLS and WTO
Conference Room 2, 10 November 2017, 10-1 pm**

Under Secretary General Ms. Fekita Molloea Utoikamanu,
Deputy Director General of WTO Mr. Yonov Frederick Agah
Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to thank OHRLLS and WTO to organize this briefing before the upcoming WTO Ministerial Meeting in Buenos Aires.

International trade is vitally important for LDCs. It does not only generate revenue and foreign currency, but also drives changes in growth, employment and production, as well as the use of natural resources. The SDG target 17.11 is aimed at doubling the least developed countries' share in global exports by 2020. However, the share of LDCs in global trade continues to decline since 2011, which greatly hinders our efforts to achieve this target.

We are deeply concerned that in 2015, merchandise exports of the LDCs contracted by 25 per cent, and further declined by 6 per cent in 2016. With all these decline, LDCs' share of world merchandise exports stand at 0.94 per cent in 2016. LDCs also experienced a record merchandise trade deficit of \$83 billion in 2016.

Kindly also allow me to express our concern at the lack of progress in the implementation of commitments made in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on trade and other areas of financing for development.

ODA remains as a critical source of financing for development for the LDCs. Total ODA from OECD-DAC countries to LDCs declined from US\$41 billion in 2014 to US\$37.3 billion in 2015 and the preliminary data for 2016 shows that bilateral ODA to LDCs further decreased by 3.9 per cent. Similarly, FDI flows to LDCs contracted by 13 per cent to \$38 billion in 2016 compared to the previous year with continued concentration on extractive and related industries. debt stocks in LDCs registered an average yearly growth rate of 6.4 per cent in the period 2009-2016. The debt-to-exports ratio increased from 81 per cent in 2011 to 136 per cent in 2016. Debt service takes up a large part of our scarce budgetary resources, representing an obstacle for economic growth, poverty eradication and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In the backdrop of such dwindling international support, there are genuine concerns in the LDCs about the prospect of success in implementing the SDGs. However, we have not lost hope in international support mechanisms. We are confident that international trade can play a vital role in assuaging the concerns of LDCs.

International partnership constitutes the bedrock of 2030 Agenda. International community must continue to promote a universal, rules-based, open, transparent, predictable, inclusive, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organization (WTO), as well as meaningful trade liberalization.

The upcoming Ministerial of the WTO is crucial for us to highlight our challenges with regard to trade which is an important means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda. We call upon

the members of the WTO to address the marginalization of the LDCs in international trade and to improve their effective participation in the multilateral trading system.

We underline the importance of delivering a development oriented outcome at the Eleventh WTO Ministerial Conference to be held in Buenos Aires, Argentina. We want to see some tangible progress coming out in the areas that are particularly relevant for LDCs, namely DFQF market access, simplified rules of origin and special priority in services' sector.

We call on the developed country and the developing country WTO members, who are in a position to do so, to realize timely implementation of duty-free and quota-free market access on a lasting basis for all products originating from all LDCs. We call on them to facilitate market access by implementing the Nairobi decision on Rules of origin for LDCs. We welcome the coming into effect of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement. However, we would also like to underline that the LDCs need support to implement the Trade Facilitation Agreement. This support should be additional to what we are receiving in other areas of our priority. We do expect that aid for trade be directed towards addressing our supply-side constraints, which we require to get benefit out of favourable treatment under DFQF market access and preferential treatment provided by the WTO members under LDCs service waiver. We have observed that, since the establishment of the WTO, trade deficit of LDCs has been increasing exponentially and our trade deficit in manufacturing sector has increased manifold. Therefore, we need to address this issue during the MC11 by having a positive outcome of the proposal made by LDC, Africa and ACP group on Special and Differential Treatment (S&DT). We like to see an outcome in the MC11, which will benefit the LDCs and will not impose additional obligation to our members. We perhaps require to address the issues of graduating LDCs in any outcome of MC11 taking into consideration that many LDCs are going to graduate from LDC status in coming years.

I look forward to hearing from Mr. DDG on the current status of negotiation in the WTO and also way forward for the vulnerable groups of countries in the upcoming Ministerial.

Thank you for your attention.