

STATEMENT OF COMMERCE MINISTER OF PAKISTAN
WTO MINISTERIAL AT PARIS 2ND JUNE 2016.

Excellency's and Fellow Ministers,

My thanks to Australia for organizing this meeting, it is most timely. Our missions in Geneva need the essential political guidance, as they prepare themselves to change gears from reflection to action. Business as usual won't work, we have to give this message and autonomy to our negotiators.

Colleagues,

We meet at Critical juncture in true sense of the word; **World economy** is in a flux, with no visible signs of recovery. We live in Times when protectionism is becoming the default norm, in this backdrop role of WTO becomes extremely important, multilateral system is the best defense against protectionism, and strong force of growth, recovery and development.

Chair, any **marginalization of WTO** would hurt the smaller economies more, WTO is widely perceived as having greater legitimacy than many international organizations, because all members have a say. WTO is not what it used to be, developing countries are more active and robust in their engagement, we should value this, it may add to complexity of WTO, but that is the beauty of the institution.

Transparency, inclusiveness and development are at the heart of legitimacy of WTO, we must jealously protect this. Director General Azevado, has lived up to his pledge of being an open, transparent and Inclusive Director General.

I urge members to make all out efforts to strengthen the trust and faith of developing countries in multilateral trading system.

WTO negotiating function has been put in to motion at MC-9 and MC-10, it has to move on, if the Institution is to retain its centrality and relevance. Negotiation is defining feature of WTO. It may be one part, but it is the lens through which World looks at WTO.

Chair...With **two successful Ministerials**, we have rare positive momentum behind us, we need to make every possible effort to stop the dysfunctionality from cropping up again.

I am made to believe the period of reflection after MC 10 has been very useful, as evidenced by some members tabling analytical and thought provoking ideas. We reiterate the need to change gears from reflection to action. But would urge that we haste carefully. Although positions fundamentally remain the same, Post Nairobi, the atmosphere is different and positive, we must protect and nurture this.

Colleagues,

I would urge for a balance of long standing issues, and new challenges, addressing 20th century issues is as important as the future issues, agriculture sector still has huge pending agenda. Delivering on pending issues has to be part of future agenda. We have to develop **a convergence of 20th and 21st century issues.**

Chair, **Agriculture** like many other members remains our core interest, particularly domestic support and Market access. But we are prepared to engage positively in all aspects of negotiations. However we would like more spotlight on cotton specially in context of domestic support Disciplines.

Chair,

WTO of future cannot be oblivious to **new challenges and opportunities** around us. World will not wait for us, it will move on, but than what it decides may not be as inclusive and supportive to small economic players.

We would positively engage on E-commerce, and work on Medium Small and Micro Enterprises (MSMES) .

MSMES is a high priority with us, 90% of our exporters are SMEs, they have huge issues, like market access, understanding global standards, export finance, non-tariff, technical and regulatory barriers to name a few. When Director General met my Prime Minister last month, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, spent considerable time highlighting the importance of SMEs for our economy.

Dear Colleagues,

E-commerce of all kinds will define business in the 21st Century. While trade stagnates, we see double digit growth in E-commerce. It can be a good way to revive trade globally and in developing countries.

2 billion people in the world are what we call the **internet generation**, for them E-commerce is a life style, and a great opportunity. There is a critical linkage of

SMEs with to E-commerce, it gives them access to global market. Digital trade is an effective tool for economic empowerment of women and youth.

Many among us may question the relevance of WTO to E-commerce, I would submit, given the fast developing and far reaching technological developments in pipeline, it is important not to get the legal framework wrong, and this is the time to deliberate and be engaged.

In my view small countries can benefit from globalization through power of E commerce, it can make Globalization Fair for developing world.

Focus on **global standards, certification, harmonization, globally compatible payments systems, globally compatible remittances system, consumer protection and buyer protection, E-commerce specific dispute settlement**, are some areas that need to be explored and debated. I would suggest we do a scooping exercise with a view to define the mutually agreed future agenda on E-Commerce.

One note of CAUTION,

Please be watchful that unification and standardization should not result in marginalization of small players-- specially our SMEs. It should not shackle our SMEs but support them.

Chair, UNCTAD **E-commerce Readiness index**, for developed world is 77, Africa is 22, Developing Asia is 41, and Pakistan is 36, this has seeds of **Deeping the digital divide** and institutionalizing it in trade too. We have to focus on the development dimension of E -commerce.

We should be very careful, that we do not devise a mechanism which prevents the arrival of new comers in this realm, presently E-commerce has its concentration in certain regions, we have to make it truly universal through our work. Traditionally when rules are being made they are generally supportive of big players, this should not happen when it comes to multilateral rulemaking in E-commerce.

Excellency's

Dialogue with **the private sector** should be made a regular feature of our work, we must make efforts to rekindle the interest of private sector in WTO, I must appreciate DGs initiative, of having launched a business dialogue recently, let's have it more frequently and more inclusively.

Finally chair, We would urge members to keep an eye on rear view mirror and give more energy and time to implementation of decisions made in MC 9 and MC 10.

Esteemed Ministers,

When I took office in mid-2013, I had difficulty justifying to my parliament our presence in Geneva; it has changed with Bali and Nairobi. Key criteria of our performance will be what difference our work makes to lives of our people. It is time we make concerted efforts to retain the center stage, we must deliver for betterment of our people.

WTO of 21st century has to help, small economies and poor of the World.

Thank you