

# EU statement at the Heads of Delegation meeting (Room W), 1 June 2015

*Statement by Ambassador Angelos Pangratis*

- Mr Chairman, with less than two months left till the July deadline for the preparation of the work-programme, we need to collectively confront reality, abandon unrealistic expectations and focus on what is achievable.
- The EU is a longstanding supporter of the multilateral system and we continue to believe in the unparalleled advantages of addressing trade issues via the WTO. The EU would like nothing better than to achieve ambitious results in the DDA, but when faced with the choice of whether we would prefer to continue aiming for high, but unrealistic ambition which threatens the entire negotiating function of this organisation, or whether we can accept a more realistic outcome which at the same time salvages and strengthens the WTO as a negotiating forum, we then clearly choose the latter.
- Concluding the DDA at a level which, while perhaps not being ideal, is nevertheless acceptable to all, would be an important step forward in our joint efforts to open trade and sustain global growth. As such, it is much better than not taking any step at all.
- In this context, the immediate priority for all of us is to adjust our expectations to what is objectively feasible. We cannot continue having a process where on the one hand we discuss recalibration options, while on the other some Members continue to put forward requests of such ambition, that they could have well fit in the totally different context of our negotiations in 2008. Convergence among us needs to be built on the foundation of the acceptance of a very basic premise: that we will not all get everything we want; but we will all get something.
- Mr Chairman, the EU firmly believes that we have a unique opportunity this year to advance on the DDA and to be in a position to reach a political deal on closing the Round in Nairobi. This has to be seen however as a final effort: if we could not reach an ambitious deal in 2008, if we avoided only at the last moment the complete failure in 2011 at MC8 and if we cannot reach a realistic deal in 2015, then we have simply run out of options on how to proceed.
- Fortunately, recent discussions have shown that most Members seem ready to focus their efforts on what is feasible. I would summarise the EU's views in this regard:
  - On market access for both agricultural and non-agricultural goods, this means recalibrating the level of



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cuts, simplifying the approaches and giving Members more flexibility in implementation. There are many options that can allow us to reach these objectives. Thus, there is no one magic proposal that can provide the answer. What we need is commitment by all to explore the options and identify those that can be acceptable to all. On non-tariff barriers, we should have a realistic outcome in line with the ambition on tariffs.

- On domestic support this means finding a way of cutting or at least capping the growth of trade distorting support.
  - On public stockholdings for food security purposes, this means finding a permanent solution which while giving developing countries flexibility in their internal food security programmes, does not disrupt international trade and does not adversely affect the food security of others.
  - On export competition, this means eliminating export subsidies and appropriately disciplining other export support measures in a parallel manner.
  - On services, this means achieving concrete results in domestic regulation and proceeding to a new exchange of offers, before MC10, that reflects ambition commensurate with the other two pillars and takes into account the new economic realities including the importance of global value chains.
  - For the rest, the EU continues to strongly believe that feasible outcomes can also be achieved in the remaining areas such as rules, TRIPS issues.
  - And finally, we think it is critical to deliver meaningful results on the issues of direct interest to the Least Developed Countries, on the basis of clear requests and priorities that they identify in the near future. The work done on the implementation of the LDC services waiver is a significant contribution in that direction.
- Mr Chairman, in order to advance toward a successful Ministerial Conference in Nairobi, we need to ensure that we have a good work-programme in place and that all issues are technically ripe for political decisions or possible trade-offs later in the year.
  - As things stand, while certain issues are being considered actively, there continues to be opposition to restarting work in other areas. Although we fully understand the reasons that motivate certain WTO Members in this regard, a way has to be found that would allow experts to engage in technical discussions to get a better understanding of what is and what isn't possible in each and every area of negotiations. Even though it is clear that all issues are linked in these negotiations and that agriculture will play a key role in setting the overall level of ambition, we need to be equally clear that a possible deal in Nairobi can only be achieved if all issues are duly addressed in our negotiating process. If we wait until the last moment to restart certain work, then we will simply be setting ourselves up for a failure, which we must do everything we can to avoid.