

EU statement at the WTO General Council meeting, 08/10/15

Statement by Ambassador Marc Vanheukelens

- Given that a comprehensive Doha deal is now unattainable, in view of the lack of readiness of some to contribute to an outcome on Domestic Support; we need to tackle two fundamental questions.
- Firstly, what can we deliver in Nairobi? When I hear the interventions this morning I am growing uncertain whether much can be done, though the G-20 has urged us to deliver. Be that as it may, we can agree with the ideas presented by the TNC Chairman and pursue an outcome centred on export competition, transparency disciplines, and development, subject to Members arriving at a balanced outcome. The EU is willing and ready to engage fully and immediately through the channels of the negotiating groups to forge a solid Nairobi package.
- On export competition, all four components need to be addressed in a balanced way. In this regard, we believe that Rev. 4 is the right starting point for our discussion.
- On transparency, the EU believes that we should seek transparency outcomes in as many areas as possible. Transparency in rules, domestic regulation, agriculture (Annex M) and NTBs have all been mentioned recently. We are ready to work in this direction.
- We all agree on the need to achieve a meaningful outcome on development.
- We should focus, first of all, on the issues of greatest interest for LDCs: Cotton, Duty-Free Quota-Free, rules of origin and the services waiver are all areas where meaningful outcomes can be achieved.
- On the other end, we remain concerned by current proposals on SDT. Only if we focus on proposals (1) aimed at addressing real problems encountered by the most vulnerable economies, primarily LDCs, in their integration in global trade, and (2) which do not open loopholes in the basic WTO rules, we will be able to make progress. We reiterate our call for realism to proponents, as well as our availability to engage constructively.
- Secondly, we need to prepare and agree on a clear vision for post-Nairobi work.
- Here let me call upon the membership to be realistic: if we couldn't reach agreement on the core DDA issues in the last 14 years and in particular over the last two years when we considered significantly recalibrated approaches, this does not inspire confidence in our ability to advance on the same basis in the future.
- Hence, while the EU agrees that negotiations need to continue post-Nairobi on certain key DDA issues, we need to consider new approaches which allow us to advance on them. In the absence of openness to consider such new approaches, no one will consider the



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DDA as a negotiating process able to deliver any longer, and the WTO's negotiating function as such will remain paralysed in its entirety.

- Our post-Nairobi vision must also remain open regarding the parallel exploration of possible negotiations on other issues, which are of interest to trader world-wide. This would herald a new era for the WTO and would help put the organisation back into the centre of trade rule-making. Otherwise, these issues may simply be taken forward elsewhere.
- We welcome the DG's initiative to start the process that leads to a text-based negotiation on the future MD, which should focus as a first priority on the text on to post-Nairobi. This process is indispensable but it should be parallel to and not hold hostage the negotiations of the Nairobi package itself. Sequencing of the post Nairobi and the Nairobi package is a sure recipe for failure, now that we have less than 10 weeks before us.