

## EU statement at Informal Heads of Delegations meeting, 31 October 2014

*Statement by Ambassador Angelos Pangratis*

- *The EU deeply regrets the decision of individual Members not to implement the consensual decisions taken by all Ministers in Bali. This is having already in a visible way a profoundly negative impact on the entire multilateral system. The timelines agreed in Bali and the trust created by MC9 have been severely disrupted, if not entirely lost already.*

- *What is particularly troubling today is to see those very Members who are at the heart of the current crisis trying to divert attention from the essence of the current stalemate and convince others to forget about the compromise achieved in Bali, to dismiss the deal reached and to pretend to go back to business as usual while in fact nothing can move forward. This is simply not possible.*

- *From the EU's perspective, there is one solution to the current crisis, which is blatantly obvious in its simplicity: we need to make good on the commitments made in Bali and implement them. This is the one solution that is in the interest of each and every Member of this organisation. The Trade Facilitation Protocol should be adopted while negotiations resume on the post-Bali work-programme and on a permanent solution to the public stockholding issue. This is the only approach that can allow us to advance on all of these issues, in the best interest of all.*

- *The EU remains fully committed to the multilateral system and to this organisation, and has a strong preference to finding a multilateral solution to the current stalemate. While those at the origin of today's situation should also be responsible for putting forward acceptable solutions, nothing of the sort has been done up to now. In this situation, business as usual is not possible.*

- *Our common efforts in Bali culminated with a Ministerial Declaration setting out the decisions reached and the work to be undertaken in the future. Despite our best efforts, we have gotten stuck in implementing Part 2 of the Declaration; until this is redressed, we do not see how progress could be made on Part 3.*

- *At the same time, the EU feels strongly that a collective effort needs to be made to minimise the impact of the current situation on those countries depending the most on a functioning multilateral system. In this context, we are ready to continue our engagement on*



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*the follow-up and implementation of the LDC and development decisions taken in Bali which are set out in Part 2 of the Declaration.*

- *Finally, it should be well understood by all that the current situation cannot last forever. Each WTO Member has to of course continue defending its trade interests, but there is a fine line between negotiating tactics leading to success and to disaster. We are perilously close to the latter.*

- *In these circumstances, the EU as well as other WTO Members will evaluate its options and see how best to move forward and how best to salvage the years of work that went into the preparation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement.*

- *The EU has a clear preference to achieve a multilateral Trade Facilitation Agreement. Anything less can only be seen as a temporary measure on the road to the full implementation of the Ministerial Decision on Trade Facilitation. Only once a multilateral outcome is secured, can the trust that is necessary to move on the rest of the DDA be rebuilt.*