
REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA



**9th Ministerial Conference of WTO
December 3-6, 2013**

**Statement by Liberia at the Ninth WTO
Ministerial Conference**

**H.E. Axel M. Addy
MINISTER
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY**

H.E. Gita Wirjawan, Chairman of MC9
Mr. Roberto Azevedo, Director General of the WTO
Excellencies,
Distinguished Ministers,
Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen;

On behalf of the people of Liberia and H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of the Republic of Liberia, let me first take this opportunity in joining other delegations in thanking the Government and People of Indonesia and Director-General Roberto Azevêdo and the WTO Secretariat for graciously hosting this all-important conference.

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I would like to particularly congratulate (You) H.E. Mr Gita Wirjawan for his (Your) election as Chairman of this Ministerial Conference as well as his (Your) Honorable Deputies, whose leadership will guide the successful conclusion of the Ninth Session. My delegation also extends congratulations to the people of Yemen in joining the multilateral trading system. I equally would like to thank Sweden and Ambassador Joachim Reiter, Chairman of Liberia's Working Party, ECOWAS, the US, and other partners who are actively supporting Liberia's accession process.

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Mr. Chairman, My delegation would like to associate itself with statements delivered by the African, LDCs, and the ACP groups.

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Mr. Chairman, Liberia has a new development plan, the Agenda for Transformation. This Agenda aims to support private sector growth and development through investments in energy, roads, and ports with special emphasis on agriculture. With more than 60% of our people engaged in agriculture, it is therefore no understatement that for Liberia, agriculture is critical to the reduction of poverty among its huge youthful population.

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Mr. Chairman, my delegation takes note of the interests of members, and will make every effort to ensure those diverse interests are clearly linked with the national objectives of promoting private sector growth and development. As an LDC, Liberia understands the vital role of the multilateral trading system in supporting the facilitation of trade and development, and the fundamental principles of transparency, predictability and non-discrimination. Let me emphasize that Liberia remains fully committed to the accession process and desires an early harvest during the administration of Her Excellency Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, which is set to

conclude by 2017. Having said that, we are concluding the development of a conservative package on our market access offers on goods and services as we work towards our second working party meeting in early 2014. However, we call on members to exercise flexibility as we lack the capacity to undertake commitments beyond our development as a post-conflict LDC with a multiplicity of challenges.

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As an acceding Government, the success or failure of agreements in Bali are critical to how our population perceive the multilateral trading system. Without progress on these agreements, the credibility and relevance of the WTO will be compromised.

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In this regard, Liberia strongly supports the position of the ACP Ministerial communique in urging all members “to show the required flexibilities to achieve consensus in the areas of Development, Least Developed Country issues, Agriculture, and Trade Facilitation and ensure a balanced outcome within and between these pillars”. Liberia appeals to all parties to reach a compromise given the importance of the issues at stake.

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Mr. Chairman, Liberia fully appreciates the support through the Enhanced Integrated Framework Programme looks forward to additional support through Tier 2 projects, which will assist us in our accession process. Liberia fully appreciates the support we receive but will need additional targeted technical assistance and financial assistance if we are to achieve an early harvest by 2017.

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In conclusion, my delegation would like to thank you for your support and strongly believes a multilateral trading system that is more universal and representative of the interests of all countries is achievable. We want to thank Director-General and the heads of all the various groupings for their leadership and flexibility and wish this Ministerial Conference all success in positively concluding on the key issues being negotiated.

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Thank you Mr. Chairman.
