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**STATEMENT BY H.E. MS MICHELLE BACHELET  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHILE**

**MC11 OPENING SESSION – 10 DECEMBER 2017**

It is my pleasure to extend my greetings to you at this session, and I wanted to take part in this Conference.

I thank the Government of Argentina for organizing this WTO Conference in especially complex times, when the multilateral system is facing significant challenges.

Last March, in an address to the WTO General Council in Geneva, I underscored the importance that my country attaches to economic openness, common ground and agreements as a means to regulate trade liberalization, drive economic growth and create employment. History shows that openness brings growth, well-being and quality jobs. Although it is certainly essential to correct deviations and inequalities, to do so, there are institutions like ours. Therefore, let us not make the mistake of going against what experience shows us.

Furthermore, the new reality of science, technology and innovation is bringing about new forms of production of goods and services, which are revolutionizing the global trading system with unprecedented vitality and at a dizzying pace, requiring firms to have more information, greater transparency and increasingly complex technological support. Against this background, we must strengthen the WTO as a global public good. To do so, we need to act with a renewed vision and caution, but without delay, and reflect on where and how to innovate and how to adjust to the economy and trade in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We must ensure social, economic and environmental sustainability and the inclusion of sectors that are still marginalized or that barely participate in the system, such as women, micro, small and medium-sized businesses and remote regions, and equip them with better mechanisms for information and transparency.

The WTO plays an indispensable role in maintaining the international system's coherence. It contributes, through its own functions and by focusing on the present and the future, to eliminating poverty and humanizing globalization. This would not be possible without growth; and without open, dynamic and fair international trade, there would be no growth.

I am confident that over the coming days, we will be able to reach the consensus needed to make substantive decisions. That said, the real purpose of these meetings, besides the exchange of ideas and experiences, which are certainly useful, is to move forward with concrete measures that produce tangible results in people's lives and in the futures of their families. Let us hope that when we conclude our work, we will feel satisfied that the system has become stronger and that we have taken an important step in Buenos Aires towards development for our peoples.

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