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**STATEMENT BY H.E. MR SOULEYMANE DIARRASSOUBA
MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY**

CÔTE D'IVOIRE

The delegation of Côte d'Ivoire thanks the UAE authorities for organizing the Thirteenth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The work of this Conference is once again taking place in a global climate of uncertainty, which exposes the fragility of the multilateral trading system, and reminds us how much the world needs a reformed WTO, capable of contributing effectively to the collective international response to present and future challenges.

With this in mind, the Ivorian delegation would like to state the following.

Côte d'Ivoire expresses its disappointment at the possibility of another Ministerial Conference ending without concrete outcomes on **agriculture, including food security and cotton**, issues which are of high priority for our country, particularly food insecurity which is a serious problem for LDCs and net food-importing developing countries.

Côte d'Ivoire would also like to call for resources to be mobilized as a matter of urgency, with a view to finding tailored solutions by shifting the paradigm and reconsidering this issue in relation to global stability and human security.

Furthermore, while remaining fully committed to **sustainable development and environmental issues**, Côte d'Ivoire would like to point out that the WTO's reflection on sustainability should focus primarily on the social and economic dimensions of this concept, and take due account of the principles underpinning multilateral environmental action, high adjustment costs and reductions in export competitiveness, particularly for micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).

Similarly, Côte d'Ivoire reiterates its long-standing concerns regarding the adoption of **SPS measures** that are not based on scientific data or evidence.

With regard to fisheries, and in accordance with its vision and commitment to the multilateral agenda for sustainable fisheries, Côte d'Ivoire deposited its instrument of acceptance of the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies on 23 October 2023, and is now a Member of the Steering Committee of the WTO Fisheries Funding Mechanism, and we welcome the work to operationalize it.

For the second wave of the negotiations, we reiterate the need for constructive engagement by all Members on the challenges related to the depletion of marine resources, while preserving special and differential treatment (S&DT).

With regard to the **Ministerial Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and the response to the COVID-19 pandemic**, my delegation should like to call for a proactive commitment by delegations, with a view to extending the Agreement to COVID-19 diagnostics and therapeutics, while widening the scope of this mechanism to cover future pandemics and emergencies.

With regard to **WTO reform**, Côte d'Ivoire welcomes the first results on the "reform by doing" component, and reiterates that it is imperative that the WTO reform process preserve the

Organization's fundamental principles with a focus on the development dimension, in line with the proposals of the G90 and the African Group on S&DT and industrial development.

With regard to the dispute settlement system, my delegation notes with concern the current impasse in the Appellate Body and reiterates the need for an inclusive, open, and transparent reform process, with operational outcomes conducive to the increased participation of developing countries and LDCs.

On the matter of e-commerce, the discussions on the Work Programme have confirmed the digital divide and the major challenges that persist in developing countries and LDCs, for which firm and inclusive international action is needed.

In addition, Côte d'Ivoire should like to stress that substantive discussions on the moratorium on electronic transmissions must be pursued as a matter of urgency.

On trade finance, Côte d'Ivoire would particularly like to thank the Director-General of the WTO and the Managing Director of the International Finance Corporation (IFC) for their personal commitments to and advocacy for access to trade finance for MSMEs.

In closing, Côte d'Ivoire echoes the statements made by the African Group, the ACP Group, the C-4, the G33 and the WAEMU member countries.

It reaffirms its commitment to the WTO and the multilateral trading system, and would like to pledge its commitment to working positively with other delegations towards the success of MC13.

SUBMITTED BY CÔTE D'IVOIRE ON BEHALF OF THE WAEMU

We, the Trade Ministers of the member States of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU);

Reaffirming our commitment to a fair, equitable and inclusive multilateral trading system, serving all Members;

Convinced that only a development-oriented multilateral trading system can contribute effectively to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals, and the prompt achievement of the objectives set out in the preamble to the Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the WTO;

Recalling the positive efforts that Members have pledged to make, since the establishment of the WTO, to ensure that developing countries, and especially the least developed countries, secure a share in the growth of international trade commensurate with the needs of their economic development;

Acknowledging and welcoming the major breakthroughs made at the Twelfth Ministerial Conference, including the conclusion of the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, the commitment to strengthen the multilateral trading system and to reform of the WTO, as well as the Ministerial Decision on the TRIPS Agreement, authorizing the use of the subject matter of a patent required for the production and supply of COVID-19 vaccines;

Concerned about the long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economies and budgetary resources of developing countries, particularly LDCs;

Taking into account the need to enhance the resilience of the economies of developing countries and LDCs in the face of future pandemics and emergencies;

Concerned about the current food security challenges, particularly those faced by LDCs and net food-importing developing countries (NFIDCs), due to the international context marked by various crises, the rising price of food, inputs and fertilizers, and the proliferation of measures prohibiting and restricting the export of essential foodstuffs;

Fearing that the digital divide and associated challenges related to digital infrastructure, connectivity and the development of e-skills, pose a major obstacle to the promotion of the digital economy in developing countries, especially LDCs, and to their full integration into international e-commerce;

Noting with concern that paragraph 8 of the MC12 Ministerial Decision on the TRIPS Agreement concerning the extension of the Agreement to cover the production and supply of COVID-19 diagnostics and therapeutics, has not been implemented;

Recalling that special and differential treatment, which is an integral part of the multilateral trading system, is essential for developing countries and LDCs, and must remain central to the work of the WTO;

Recognizing the need to continue providing and strengthening funding for targeted technical assistance and capacity-building programmes;

Recalling United Nations Resolutions A/RES/59/209 and A/RES/67/221 on the smooth transition strategy for countries graduating from the list of LDCs;

Recognizing the need to facilitate access to trade finance for micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), especially those from developing countries and LDCs, particularly in a crisis context;

Declare that:

1. Regarding WTO reform, including development and the dispute settlement system

1. We call for meaningful reforms with improved rules, taking due account of the realities and concerns of developing countries and LDCs.
2. We stress that the reform should not call into question the principles and decision-making procedures of the multilateral trading system, rather it should focus on addressing the challenges of integrating developing countries and LDCs into the value chain of the global production and trade system, and on proposing ways to enhance assistance for them.
3. We urge the WTO Secretariat to continue to provide and increase support to developing countries in need, and in particular LDCs, to overcome the difficulties they experience in implementing notification obligations.
4. We reaffirm our commitment to a two-tier dispute settlement system and call upon Members to make the Dispute Settlement Body fully functional. We stress the need for the WTO dispute settlement reform process to be open, transparent, inclusive and consensual, and to result in rules and mechanisms that improve developing countries' and LDCs' access to and participation in the system.
5. We call for an outcome on special and differential treatment in accordance with paragraph 44 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration, paragraph 2 of the MC12 Outcome Document, and the agreement-specific proposals submitted by the G90.

2. Regarding agriculture, including food security, and sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures

1. We welcome the constructive efforts of the Chair of the Committee on Agriculture in Special Session (CoASS) to reach a consensus decision on agriculture and related matters linked to food security.
2. We express our utmost concern at the lack of results or even significant progress in the negotiations on agricultural trade reform.

3. We call on Members to demonstrate greater openness and commitment to addressing the issue of agriculture, including food security, which remains a priority for the countries of our Union.
4. We call for a consensual approach to the principles that should guide further agricultural negotiations after MC13, while stressing the need for concrete and effective action to be taken as a matter of urgency within the WTO to address the food insecurity risks to which LDCs and net food-importing developing countries (NFIDCs) remain highly exposed.
5. We take note of the discussions held with a view to further enhancing implementation of the SPS Agreement as part of a work programme. We remain, however, deeply concerned about the increase in the number of arbitrary and non-science-based SPS measures.

3. Regarding cotton

1. We actively support the efforts of the Sectoral Initiative in Favour of Cotton (C-4 + Côte d'Ivoire) for concrete, ambitious, timely and specific outcomes at MC13, and reaffirm our support for the draft decision on cotton proposed by the C-4 countries and Côte d'Ivoire, as an interim solution.
2. We welcome the decision by the General Assembly of the United Nations to celebrate World Cotton Day on 7 October each year, highlighting the unique characteristics and importance of cotton for the economies of cotton-producing and -exporting developing countries and LDCs, and for the hundreds of millions of people whose lives and livelihoods depend on it.
3. We call on Members and partners to step up cotton development assistance. We welcome the Memorandum of Understanding between the WTO and the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), concluded on 27 September 2022, an important aspect of which is promoting the cotton of the C-4 countries and Côte d'Ivoire, by taking actions to strengthen their participation in the global value chain of the football economy.

4. Regarding fisheries subsidies

1. We welcome the adoption of the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies in June 2022. We call on Member States to accelerate internal processes for the deposit of instruments of acceptance of the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies. We reaffirm the commitment of the WAEMU member States to continue their efforts to ratify the Agreement as soon as possible in order to consolidate regional gains.
2. We welcome the effective launch of the WTO Fisheries Funding Mechanism to assist developing and least-developed country Members in the implementation of the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, and express our gratitude to the Fisheries Funding Mechanism Trust Fund donors.
3. We reaffirm our support for the second wave of negotiations on disciplines for fisheries subsidies, and call for outcomes that represent a meaningful WTO contribution to the international effort to conserve marine resources, and that take full account of special and differential treatment.

5. Regarding e-commerce

1. We commend the efforts of the Facilitator of the e-commerce work programme and moratorium that have reinvigorated this Programme.
2. We reaffirm our determination to contribute to a consensual solution on e-commerce, and we support Members in finding proposals.

3. We call for all actors to mobilize efforts to significantly narrow the digital divide, including through increased international financial and technical support, in order to build the capacity of developing economies, improve connectivity and skills, and enhance international cooperation in areas related to digital trade.
4. We welcome the joint WTO-World Bank initiative on e-commerce entitled "Turning Digital Trade into a Catalyst for African Development". We reiterate our high expectations regarding the contribution of this initiative to meeting the challenges of the beneficiary countries' national digital trade ecosystems, while at the same time hoping that this initiative will be extended to all the countries of our Union when it is fully rolled out.

6. Regarding trade-related intellectual property rights

1. We note the lack of implementation of paragraph 8 of the Ministerial Decision on the TRIPS Agreement. We invite Members to take a decision to extend the TRIPS waiver to cover the production and supply of COVID-19 diagnostics and therapeutics.

7. Regarding the implementation of decisions in favour of LDCs

1. We call for the full implementation of the Bali, Nairobi and Buenos Aires Ministerial Decisions in favour of LDCs. We reaffirm our support for the Aid for Trade Initiative and its 2023-2024 Work Programme, which focuses on partnerships for food security, digital connectivity and mainstreaming trade, and look forward to its effective implementation.

8. Regarding LDC graduation

1. We welcome the decision adopted by the WTO General Council on 23 October 2023, encouraging WTO Members to provide a smooth and sustainable transition period after the entry into force of a decision by the UN General Assembly to graduate a country from the LDC category.
2. We support the LDC Group's proposal for 17 LDC-specific S&DT provisions in WTO agreements and decisions, and call on all Members to work constructively towards a decision on S&DT at MC13 or thereafter.

9. Regarding micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs)

1. We call for the strengthening of initiatives and capacity-building for MSMEs to facilitate their access to trade information and to better integrate them into international trade.

10. Regarding Aid for Trade and the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF)

1. We are pleased to note that the WTO continues to prioritize Aid for Trade. We particularly welcome the establishment of an interim arrangement to support the transition from Phase 2 of the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) to the future programme.
2. We call for the future programme to be launched no later than January 2025, and encourage financial partners to place particular emphasis on the processing of products that have benefited from previous programmes.

11. Regarding trade, environmental sustainability and inclusion

1. We are of the view that the WTO and the multilateral trading system can help to address the global environmental challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.
2. We note with concern the proliferation of unilateral measures taken for so-called environmental purposes, the effects of which act as non-tariff barriers to market access for the products and goods concerned.

3. We call on Members and development partners to intensify their respective efforts to step up the contribution of trade to the empowerment of women and youth.
