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EGYPT

At the outset, I would like to thank the government of the United Arab Emirates for their immense efforts in organizing and hosting our Thirteenth Ministerial Conference. I would also like to welcome the accession of Comoros and Timor-Leste.

Our thirteenth session takes place at a time of increased uncertainties and compounding crises including the pandemic, geopolitical tensions, hiking food prices, climate shocks, and growing debt hitting hardest developing countries, in particular, the most vulnerable to supply shocks and spiralling inflation including LDCs and Net Food Importing Developing Countries (NFIDCs).

Accompanied by the depreciation of their local currencies, the burden for those countries, including Egypt, has in fact doubled and we have suffered severe consequences. The cost of financing imports of a basic essential need and right, that is food, has more than doubled in comparison to 2020, hence putting ineludible pressure on their fiscal space to address other equally important challenges.

It has been emphasized, time and time, that sustainable global economic recovery requires structural reforms and transformations. The need to bolster domestic capacities to produce food, achieve industrialization and economic diversification is crucial for achieving resilience to current and future crises particularly for developing countries.

Egypt firmly believes that **trade and trade rules play a pivotal role in supporting the required structural reforms and transformations in our countries. MC13 is a great opportunity to enhance trade's ability to deliver to our people.**

It is imperative to demonstrate to the **world** that, through our collective **moral obligation, efforts and will** that the multilateral trading system with the WTO at its core is still able to deliver **concrete and tangible developmental outcomes** that facilitate and secure the basic needs of our people and their aspirations including **food, health, improved living standards and growing jobs**. It is in our hands to prioritize and deliver in MC13:

- **A credible and comprehensive food security package that addresses the imminent needs of LDCs and NFIDCs.** Noting that the work programme established under paragraph 8 of our MC12 Declaration on the Emergency response to Food Insecurity yielded no outcomes to be felt by our people, we cannot afford to deliver empty promises on such a vital issue in MC13.

Immediate and concrete measures need to be agreed upon to enhance the resilience of those countries to international shocks in particular for basic foodstuffs which the international market for food is considered a lifeline including through:

- Affording NFIDCs the appropriate flexibility to bolster their domestic production of basic food stuffs necessary for their food security and building resilience against future crises by allowing them to temporarily surpass their AMS *de minimis* levels for basic foodstuffs to relief their heavy reliance on imports.

- Refraining from imposing export restrictions or prohibitions on foodstuffs that will be imported by LDCs and NFIDCs for their domestic consumption.
- Working with the other relevant international organizations to ease the financial constraints facing those countries.
- A long overdue awaited **permanent solution on public stockholding for food security purposes** and a **special safeguard mechanism for developing countries**.
- **A roadmap** with a clear set of parameters to deliver on our mandates to address the longstanding imbalances in the AoA, giving priority to levelling the playing in **domestic support in a fair and equitable manner**.
- **A fair and balanced outcome on fisheries subsidies** that ensures that the biggest subsidizers who have for long exploited the seas and oceans take greater responsibility, while affording appropriate and effective Special and differential treatment to developing countries necessary to secure them with sufficient policy space to sustainably develop their fisheries sector, and safeguard their food security and livelihood of artisanal and small scale fishing.
- **Improved Special and Differential Treatment for developing countries**, that affords appropriate policy space and tools to achieve their structural transformation and industrialization objectives.
- **Enhanced Technology transfer to developing countries** and LDCs through existing WTO rules and mandates and examining needed flexibilities in existing agreements is a requisite to support their transformation effort including digitalization, addressing major challenges of climate change and fighting pandemics.
- **A continuation of a WTO Reform process with development at its core and restoring the appellate body to ensure a well-functioning two-tier dispute settlement system** through an open, transparent and inclusive process, upholding the basic principles and objectives of the WTO particularly Special and Differential Treatment for developing countries which is an integral part of WTO Agreements and Negotiations.

I am confident that through our constructive work together, we will be able to deliver to our people meaningful outcomes that positively impact their lives and reaffirm the credibility of the multilateral trading system and the pivotal role of the WTO amid such turbulent times.

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