
Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya, UN Under-Secretary-General and High Representative,
Mr. Roberto Azevedo, Director General of the WTO,
Honorable Ministers and Heads of delegations, Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates, representatives from the UN system and other international organizations,

First of all, I would like to express our appreciation to the United Nations Office of the High Representative for Least-developed countries, Landlocked developing countries and Small Island developing states (UN-OHRLLS) and the World Trade Organization for organizing the fifth meeting of Trade Ministers of LLDCs.

Mongolia would like to underline the importance of addressing trade-related obstacles and constraints of landlocked developing countries, arising due to geographical disadvantages, such as the lack of territorial access to the sea, remoteness from the major world markets, which increases their trade costs by more than twice that of the coastal countries.

In this regard, we believe that this Ministerial meeting would provide an important platform to share the experience and progress made by LLDCs in participating in international trade since the Fourth Meeting of Trade Ministers as well as to discuss and identify strategies, new measures and recommendations on how to improve the trade potential of the landlocked developing countries.

We would also like to underscore the vital importance of implementing the Vienna Program of Action, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a new global development framework, which has an important provision on supporting and strengthening trade capacity of developing countries, particularly LDCs and LLDCs.

Ten years of the negotiations have resulted in WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement at the 9th Ministerial Conference held in Bali, Indonesia. This agreement is of particular importance for
LLDC’s by creating a common platform for goods in transit as well as by streamlining and standardizing customs procedures thus reducing high trade costs.

As a land-locked country, Mongolia emphasizes the importance of ratification and implementation of the WTO’s Trade Facilitation Agreement, ensuring trade facilitation through removal transit transport obstacles, thus guaranteeing the freedom of transit of developing countries. In this connection, I am pleased to inform that the TFA Agreement has been presented to the Parliament of Mongolia for the ratification.

With regard to the issue of a specific Work Program for the LLDCs, we align ourselves with the position of LLDCs group in identifying concrete actions in order to launch the Work Program in the WTO, including of issues related to trade facilitation, transit transport, Aid for trade, services, regional integration and cooperation, accession and capacity building.

As a small and vulnerable economy, Mongolia has been taking systematic measures related to trade facilitation, in particular on reducing procedures that increase the cost of businesses, transportation burdens, administrative regulations, elimination of obstacles related to border control procedures and customs clearance.

Mongolia still falls under the importing country category. In order to neutralize the unfavourable circumstances for trade development, the Government of Mongolia is working towards liberalizing trade, enriching bilateral and multilateral trade and economic cooperation with new contents and forms.

Given the importance of better trade regulation that would be beneficial for encouraging the overall business climate and the need for bringing up the national trade regulatory system to the global trends and practices, we have drafted a Trade Law. The drafting exercise was followed by series of discussions involving the Government and the private sector of Mongolia. Now, the draft law is ready to be presented to the Parliament for review and discussion. This law will clearly define the rights and duties of relevant parties, trade category and regulation of goods, intellectual property rights, export, import standards, technical regulation and control. We believe that this law would have significant positive impact on trade development from a legal aspect.
Mongolia is aiming to take active part in international and regional economic integration. Mongolia has recently successfully concluded negotiations with all participating states for the accession to the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA). The expected benefits of preferential trade and investment cooperation under APTA for Mongolia would be gaining more business opportunities for its main export goods, and thereby increase the trade volume between Mongolia and APTA States.

Furthermore, Mongolia is exploring further possibilities of expanding its bilateral trade and economic cooperation with its main trading partners.

As the initiator and host country of International Think Tank for LLDCs, Mongolia calls upon all LLDCs to accede to the Multilateral Agreement for the Establishment of an International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries. This would bring this multilateral organization into full operation for the benefits of all landlocked developing countries.

In conclusion, I take this opportunity to invite all of you to the side event on launching a book - “Multilateral Trade Negotiations and LLDCs: A handbook for negotiators and practitioners of LLDCs” which was developed and published by the ITT for LLDCs and briefing session about the activities and current status of the ITT for LLDCs. The event will take place between 1.30-3.00 pm on 24 June 2016 at the S3 Room of the WTO.

I thank you.