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Groups of countries in special situations: specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries: outcome of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation

Letter dated 25 June 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Paraguay to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Paraguay, chair of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, the Declaration adopted at the Meeting of Trade Ministers of Landlocked Developing Countries, held in the Kingdom of Swaziland on 21-22 October 2009 (see annex).

In that regard, I should be grateful if you would arrange for this letter and the Declaration to be circulated as a General Assembly document under agenda item 56 (b).

(Signed) José Antonio **Dos Santos**
Permanent Representative
Chairman of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries



Annex to the letter dated 25 June 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Paraguay to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English]

Ezulwini Declaration

Adopted at the Third Meeting of Trade Ministers of Landlocked Developing Countries, held in Ezulwini, Kingdom of Swaziland, 21 and 22 October 2009

We, the Ministers for Trade of the Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), meeting in Ezulwini, Kingdom of Swaziland, on 21 and 22 October 2009,

Recognizing the development challenges faced by our countries due to the geographical disadvantage of having no territorial access to the sea and the ensuing serious difficulties for the effective integration of our economies into the multilateral trading system,

Meeting at a time when the global economy is faced with compound crises, particularly the financial and economic crises, which are hampering economic development of our countries through, inter alia, a steep fall in international trade, a rise in protectionism, a substantive decline in remittances, a noticeable contraction in foreign direct investment (FDI) and credit markets, as well as a heightened risk of a reduction in official development assistance (ODA), as a consequence of which LLDCs have to cope with slower economic growth, which may translate into rising poverty levels and an increasing likelihood of missing critical Millennium Development Goal targets,

Recognizing that while our countries are not responsible for the financial and economic crises, we are among those worst hit by its effects on international trade, global financial flows and multilateral cooperation,

Reaffirming our belief in potential benefits of a non-discriminatory, rules-based multilateral trading system and predictable trading environment, which takes into account the development dimension of international trade and responds to the needs of developing countries, notably those that are particularly vulnerable,

Emphasizing the importance of the development dimension of the Doha Work Programme and the commitment of the members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) to reach a final outcome consistent with the trade-related needs of developing countries,

Recognizing the special vulnerable status of LLDCs acceding to WTO and the challenges faced by these countries within the context of their accession processes,

Recalling the successful previous two meetings of Ministers for Trade of the Landlocked Developing Countries held in Paraguay in 2005 and in Mongolia in 2007 and the respective outcome documents, the Asunción Platform for the Doha Development Round and the Ulaanbaatar Declaration,

Recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in which the Heads of State and Government recognized the special needs and problems of landlocked

developing countries, and urging both bilateral and multilateral donors to increase financial and technical assistance to this group of countries to help them overcome the impediments of geography,

Recalling further the outcome of the 2005 World Summit and General Assembly resolutions 56/180, 57/242, 58/201, 59/245, 60/208, 61/212, 62/204, 63/228 related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries,

Recalling also the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries, and the Almaty Ministerial Declaration, as well as the outcome of the midterm review meeting of the Almaty Programme of Action, held in October 2008,

Further recalling the ministerial communiqué adopted by the Ministers of Trade of LLDCs within the framework of UNCTAD XII, on 22 April 2008, in Accra,

We the Ministers;

Global economic crisis

1. Express our deep concern about the economic and social implications of the current financial and economic crises, particularly with regard to the impact on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

2. Call on our bilateral and multilateral development partners to fully implement the measures and actions agreed at recent high-level meetings, notably, the United Nations Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development, as well as the London and Pittsburgh Summits of the Group of Twenty (G-20) (2009), to swiftly overcome the global economic crisis and to lay the foundations for a sustainable recovery for all, particularly the most vulnerable, such as LLDCs.

3. Denounce all protective measures that may curtail market access for products from LLDCs and call for constructive and development-oriented multilateral trade negotiations to revive global trade. Furthermore, we call upon our bilateral and multilateral development partners to honour their development commitments and to take decisive measures in support of landlocked developing countries to safeguard hard won development gains made during the past decades.

Multilateral trade negotiations

4. Underscore the critical role of international trade and investment for development and growth of landlocked developing countries. We welcome the G-20 Washington, D.C. (2008), London (2009) and Pittsburgh (2009) commitments to refrain from increasing barriers to investment and trade of goods and services and to rectify promptly any such measures in conformity with WTO rules. We urge WTO members to conclude negotiations under the Doha Development Agenda in order to deal with emerging protectionist measures. We, nevertheless, recognize the importance of maintaining policy space for LLDCs, allowing them to use commercial and financial measures for purposes of development. We also welcome the enhanced monitoring process of measures taken by the WTO members in response to the current global economic crisis.

5. Call on all WTO members to expedite the multilateral trade negotiations held under the Doha Round and restore development objectives at the heart of the negotiation. We call for the effective, full and democratic participation of all members and a multilateral, transparent, bottom up and member driven negotiation process in order to arrive at a successful conclusion with an ambitious, balanced and equitable outcome, which ensures, inter alia, improved market access for agricultural and non-agricultural export products of LLDCs.

6. Urge all WTO members to agree to a comprehensive review of the issues relating to the trade of LLDCs. This review, to be held under the auspices of the General Council, shall attempt to arrive at concrete measures that could be taken with a view to mitigating the adverse impact of landlockedness on development and to facilitating the development of productive capacities and economic diversification in our countries.

7. Reiterate our support for the proposal made by the members of the sectoral initiative in favour of cotton (C4) related to the reduction of the domestic support, which distorts the international cotton market. WTO members are also urged to adopt measures to improve market access for cotton and cotton-derived products. The outcome of the agricultural negotiations shall ensure that WTO members in a position to do so can take joint action to set up a mechanism to address the loss of revenue for vulnerable cotton-producing countries are facing as a result of declining cotton prices in international markets due to highly distorting subsidies.

8. Participate effectively in the forthcoming seventh ministerial conference of WTO, scheduled to be held in December 2009 in Geneva.

Trade facilitation

9. Highlight the importance of the trade facilitation negotiations for LLDCs and to ensure that the agreement on trade facilitation in the final outcome of the Doha development round contains binding commitments ensuring the freedom of transit, as well as the expedite movement, release and clearance of goods. The ultimate objective must be the lowering of transaction costs, inter alia, by reducing transport time and enhancing certainty in transborder trade.

10. Ensure that the final outcome also addresses adequately the issue of special and differential treatment, technical assistance and capacity-building in accordance with the annex D decision of the General Council of 1 August 2004. To ensure that the trade facilitation negotiations deliberate on the substantial improvement of articles V, VIII and X of General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

Accession to the World Trade Organization

11. Call for the provision of enhanced assistance and “aid for trade” to those landlocked developing countries that are still outside the rules-based multilateral trading system and wish to accede to WTO. We stress the need for taking into account the individual levels of development and the special needs and problems caused by the geographical disadvantage of being landlocked during the accession process to WTO. All provisions on special and differential treatment reflected in the GATT and in all WTO agreements shall be granted to all acceding LLDCs.

Resource mobilization

12. Call on our bilateral and multilateral development partners not only to maintain current levels of ODA transfers to LLDCs, but also to raise commitments.

13. Request an expeditious implementation of the aid for trade agenda, which should give adequate consideration to the special needs and requirements of LLDCs. LLDCs attach great importance to the aid for trade agenda and are committed to enhancing their participation in the monitoring process to better articulate its trade needs and priorities for support. These areas of targeted support include capacity-building for the formulation of trade policies, participation in trade negotiations and implementation of international agreements, particularly in strengthening of productive capacities with a view to increasing the competitiveness of LLDCs products in export markets.

14. Call on members to recognize the clear links between the aid for trade initiative, developing trade infrastructure and the implementation of trade facilitation measures. For LLDCs, it is important that our bilateral and multilateral development partners further increase their support to projects integrating these elements. We are committed to take greater ownership of this initiative by further mainstreaming trade into national, regional and economic development strategies. Given the importance of regional trade for LLDCs and our dependence on transit countries for extraregional trade, we urge that the regional dimension of aid for trade be strengthened by involving regional partners, including the development banks and bilateral donors.

15. To recognize the role of foreign direct investment (FDI), which may help accelerate development and reduce poverty through employment, transfer of managerial and technological know-how and non-debt creating flows of capital, as well as its key role in providing infrastructure for transport, telecommunications and utilities. We call on capital exporting countries to support efforts made by LLDCs in attracting FDI and to adopt and implement economic, financial and legal incentives to encourage FDI flows to LLDCs.

New and emerging challenges

16. Express our concerns about new and emerging challenges that LLDCs will face increasingly in the near and medium-term future, which could jeopardize our development prospects. We call on our bilateral and multilateral partners, as well as on relevant international organizations, to assist LLDCs in their efforts to master these new and emerging challenges such as the impact of climate change and migration on the trade competitiveness and the institutional capacity of LLDCs, which were not addressed in the Almaty Programme of Action.

17. Encourage the pertinent international organizations to assist LLDCs to better understand the implications of climate change on LLDCs and to develop measures to counter its adverse effects. Climate change can undermine international efforts towards poverty reduction and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The world's poorest are the most affected and yet the least prepared to confront the challenge of adapting to climate change and mitigating its effects, as demonstrated by the recent floods ravaging landlocked developing countries in West Africa. The adverse effects of climate change are manifesting themselves in LLDCs through various channels, including impacts on agriculture

production, food security, water stress, erosion of biodiversity and human health. We take note of the forthcoming Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen. As LLDCs, we are vulnerable to the impact of climate change. We call on this meeting to recognize the serious threat posed by climate change and to address the specific problems and challenges of climate change on LLDCs.

Multilateral cooperation arrangements

18. Call upon the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to strengthen the institutional and operational capacity of UNCTAD to address the complex and severe development challenges faced by LLDCs, in accordance with the Accra Accord and relevant General Assembly resolutions.

19. Express our appreciation to the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS), UNCTAD, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations regional economic commissions, WTO, the International Trade Centre, the World Bank, bilateral donors, regional development banks and the Agency for International Trade Information and Cooperation (AITIC) for their continuous support to LLDCs, as well as for the provision of valuable help and timely information on trade-related issues and other issues of specific interest to LLDCs.

20. Request the organizations of the United Nations system, particularly UNCTAD, UN-OHRLLS, UNDP, the United Nations regional economic commissions, and other international organizations, especially the World Bank, WTO and the World Customs Organization, to strengthen their work within their respective mandates towards the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action and the outcome of its midterm review.

21. Further request UN-OHRLLS, UNCTAD, UNDP, the United Nations regional economic commissions, WTO, ITC and AITIC to continue to assist landlocked developing countries in their efforts to effectively participate in international trade discussions and negotiations, including in the Doha round of trade negotiations and other WTO forums.

22. Welcome the launching of the international think tank for the landlocked developing countries in Mongolia, which was inaugurated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 27 July 2009 in Ulaanbaatar, with the objective of enhancing the analytical capability of landlocked developing countries and providing home-grown research to cater for our specific needs and maximize our coordinated efforts for the full and effective implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action and the Millennium Development Goals. We expect that the relevant studies and recommendations by the think tank will make a contribution to the WTO negotiations on trade facilitation, with a view to improving articles V, VIII and X of GATT. We express our gratitude to the Government of Mongolia for taking on this noble task and its continued leadership in matters pertaining to landlocked developing countries. We urge international organizations and donor countries to support the operational activities of the think tank.

Acknowledgment

We, the Ministers for Trade of the Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), meeting in Ezulwini, Kingdom of Swaziland, on 21 and 22 October 2009, express our profound appreciation to the Right Honourable Prime Minister Dr. Sibusiso Barnabas Dlamini for his inspiring opening address, and thank the authorities and the people of the Kingdom of Swaziland for hosting this event.
