
PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE ON THE WTO

Organized jointly by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the European Parliament

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DECLARATION

As members of the Steering Committee of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO, we wish to add our voice to the call for fresh impetus to be provided to the Doha Round. 2012 should not be a lost year for the negotiations. There is a potential for achieving prompt results in a few “ripe” areas and we call on WTO Members to be pragmatic, realistic and constructive in moving in that direction. This should be done without prejudice to the multilateral nature of the WTO, the developmental objective of the Round and the premise of the single undertaking.

The area of trade facilitation appears to be particularly promising. Progress in this area would open up win-win prospects for all WTO Members, especially if the agreed measures are accompanied by adequate technical assistance and capacity-building actions with specific focus on the least-developed countries.

We share the view that, at a time of fragile recovery following a global economic downturn, the risks of trade protectionism remain high and are not to be taken lightly. Legal certainty is also essential for trade to fulfil its potential. This is all the more true in view of the spread of global value chains, where both imports and exports are essential for job creation and growth.

In the face of growing challenges to multilateralism, we reiterate our belief in the crucial importance of the multilateral trading system, with the WTO at its centre. For trade to serve as an engine of inclusive growth, employment, sustainable development and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals by all nations, the multilateral trading system must remain open, flexible, transparent, inclusive, non-discriminatory and rules-based, with WTO disciplines strengthened and perfected.