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# PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE ON THE WTO

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

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## Thirty-second session of the Steering Committee

2 October 2014, IPU Headquarters, Geneva

### STATEMENT

At the time of the 9<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference in Bali, we expressed our conviction that the adoption of the Bali Package, including trade facilitation and certain elements on agriculture and development, would bring significant economic benefits to all WTO Members.

It is with concern therefore that we observe a lack of tangible progress in the implementation of the Bali Package, resulting in a precarious situation where multiple areas of negotiation may suffer a freezing effect, including those of greatest interest to developing countries - especially the least developed countries - such as agriculture.

Missed deadlines and a dearth of advancement towards permanent solutions remind us of the times when the Doha Round was completely stalled. The success of the Bali Conference raised hopes that new dynamics could be injected into the negotiations. The admission that these hopes were in vain and the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) is once again endangered appears to be politically untenable.

We find it profoundly regrettable therefore that the decisions taken in Bali have not been respected, notably that the Protocol to the Trade Facilitation Agreement was not agreed within the deadline. While we underline the linkage with food security, the importance of this issue and the sovereign right of WTO Members in that regard, reverting to the decisions taken in Bali would have serious consequences for and undermine the credibility of the organization. We urge Members, therefore, to try to find without delay a solution for a single undertaking which does not put the whole process and the DDA in jeopardy.

As legislators entrusted with the task of overseeing international trade negotiations and scrutinizing the implementation of the commitments entered into by our respective governments, we encourage the negotiators to boost their efforts and move the process forward with renewed vigour.

The WTO has struggled for years to convince a sceptical public of the enduring value of multilateralism and should continue to do so. The Bali Package was seen as a turning point, a major breakthrough. Failure to deliver on that promise is not an option.