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Page: 1/2

**Ministerial Conference
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PRESIDENTIAL DECLARATION

OPENING CEREMONY OF THE ELEVENTH WTO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

The following communication, dated 12 December 2017, is being circulated at the request of the delegations of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Guyana, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname and Uruguay.

The Governments of Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Guyana, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname and Uruguay, meeting in Buenos Aires on 10 December 2017 on the occasion of the Eleventh Ministerial Conference (MC11) of the World Trade Organization (WTO),

Agree that on the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1947, the objectives of improving people's standard of living, achieving full employment and increasing the production of and trade in goods and services remain every bit as relevant while at the same time contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;

Reaffirm that multilateralism is the best way to take advantage of the opportunities and to face the challenges of international trade. Consequently, they confirm the importance of preserving and strengthening the multilateral trading system, including its dispute settlement mechanism, in order to promote rules-based, open, transparent, inclusive, non-discriminatory and equitable trade embodied in the WTO, providing it with the tools it needs to face the challenges of the 21st century;

Stress the importance of holding MC11 in the Argentine Republic, and thank the Argentine Government and people for hosting this international trade summit, while reaffirming their commitment to obtaining positive and substantive outcomes capable of bringing tangible benefits to the peoples of the region and of contributing to ensuring that the WTO continues to be at the heart of world trade governance;

Undertake to coordinate actions in the WTO in order to pursue the process of reforming the rules of international trade in agricultural products, to work towards the prohibition of certain forms of fisheries subsidies, to make progress in domestic regulation in services, and to discuss topics of increasing relevance to the trade agenda of the 21st century, including electronic commerce, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), and investment facilitation;

Welcome the entry into force, on 22 February 2017, of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, which will facilitate trade flows globally and, in particular, at regional level, while helping to promote and enhance customs cooperation and the integration of our countries into regional and global value chains;

Undertake to strengthen dialogue between the countries in the region, with a view to harmonizing the various initiatives that exist in Latin America, orienting them towards achieving results in terms of regional integration and increased participation in world trade;

Draw particular attention to the work carried out jointly by the Pacific Alliance and MERCOSUR in relation to the Roadmap agreed at the Ministerial meeting in April 2017;

Underscore that, in the current international context of slow economic growth and tentative global trade recovery, a joint effort is needed to consolidate the growth of the respective economies, to reduce inequality and to enhance public policies that promote gender equality and help to create decent and quality employment, coupled with efforts to improve education, to build capacity to innovate and to benefit from new technology, and to work together to eradicate poverty and hunger, in accordance with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In light of the above-mentioned commitments, they invite other WTO Members wishing to join this Declaration to do so.
