WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

WT/MIN(17)/46

11 December 2017

(17-6820)

Ministerial Conference
Eleventh Session
Buenos Aires, 10-13 December 2017

Original: English

JOINT MINISTERIAL STATEMENT FROM THE "FRIENDS OF MSMES"

The following communication, dated 11 December 2017, is being circulated at the request of the delegations of the Friends of MSMES.

We, the Heads of Delegations representing the following Members of the WTO: Afghanistan; Albania; Antigua and Barbuda; Argentina; Australia; Bahrain; Brazil; Brunei Darussalam; Canada; Chile; China; Colombia; Costa Rica; Dominica; Dominican Republic; Ecuador; El Salvador; European Union; Grenada; Guatemala; Honduras; Hong Kong, China; Iceland; Israel; Japan; Kazakhstan; Kenya; Korea, Republic of; Kyrgyz Republic; Liechtenstein; Malaysia; Mexico; Moldova, Republic of; Montenegro; New Zealand; Nicaragua; Norway; Pakistan; Panama; Paraguay; Peru; Philippines; Qatar; Russian Federation; Saint Kitts and Nevis; Saint Lucia; Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; Singapore; Switzerland; Chinese Taipei; The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; Turkey; Uruguay and Viet Nam.

Acknowledge that the participation of Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) in international trade has emerged as an important issue in the multilateral trading system and in the WTO agenda;

Recognize that MSMEs perform a significant role in the national economies of WTO Members, as sources of job creation, innovation, entrepreneurship and economic growth;

Note that costs related to foreign trade operations represent a significant burden for the participation of MSMEs in international trade;

Acknowledge that MSMEs from developing countries and especially the least developed countries among them face additional obstacles when participating in international trade;

Decide to build on the work undertaken by the WTO in addressing trade issues and the relevant work of other international organizations;

Reaffirm our commitment, as reflected in document WT/MIN(17)/24 to begin a multilateral discussion through the establishment of a Work Program in the WTO to address some of the obstacles faced by MSMEs in international trade;

Call for a dedicated Minister-level meeting on MSMEs at MC11 for all Members to discuss this important topic. We call upon all WTO Members to actively participate in this dedicated meeting;

Call all WTO Members to adopt a ministerial decision at MC11 as reflected in document WT/MIN(17)/24 to strengthen efforts aimed at promoting the participation of MSMEs in international trade.

Buenos Aires, Argentina, 11 December 2017