



Statement by India at conclusion of WTO Ministerial Conference at Buenos Aires

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The World Trade Organisation (WTO) Ministerial Conference (MC) ended today in Buenos Aires. Although it ended without a Ministerial Declaration or any substantive outcome, the unanimous view was that it was extremely well-conducted with complete openness and transparency and the process afforded everyone ample opportunity to express their views.

In the run-up to MC11, decisions were expected on a permanent solution on food security and other agriculture issues. Unfortunately, the strong position of one member against agricultural reform based on current WTO mandates and rules, led to a deadlock without any outcome on agriculture or even a work programme for the next two years.

However, the existing mandates and decisions ensure that work will go forward and members will continue to work on issues such as the permanent solution on public stockholding for food security purposes, agricultural Special Safeguard Mechanism and agricultural domestic support.

Some of the other decisions that were taken included a Work Programme on disciplines on Fisheries Subsidies with a view to arriving at a decision by MC12. It was also decided to continue with the non-negotiating mandate of the existing Work Programme on E-commerce.

Ministerial Decisions on new issues like Investment Facilitation, MSMEs, gender and trade, which lacked a mandate or consensus, were not taken forward.

Due to divergences among members, and a few members not supporting acknowledgment and reiteration of key underlying principles guiding the WTO and various agreed mandates, Ministers could not arrive at an agreed Ministerial Declaration.

The Chairperson in her remarks mentioned the widely expressed support for the multilateral trading system and the commitment to move forward on various areas of work in the WTO.

During MC11 India stood firm on its stand on the fundamental principles of the WTO, including multilateralism, rule-based consensual decision-making, an independent and credible dispute resolution and appellate process, the centrality of development, which underlies the DDA, and special and differential treatment for all developing countries.

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