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**Ministerial Conference
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**OPENING SESSION
3 DECEMBER 2013
ADDRESS BY H.E. DR. SUSILO BAMBANG YUDHOYONO
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA**

*Bismillahirrahmanirrahim
Assalamu'alaikum Wr. Wb.
Om Swastyastu*
Peace and Prosperity be upon us all

Let me first and foremost welcome you all to Bali. You are all gathered here from all corners of the globe for the most important event of the WTO calendar: the Ninth WTO Ministerial Conference.

I wish to extend my deepest appreciation to Mr. Roberto Azevêdo, Director-General of WTO, for his able leadership and important role in bridging the various differing interests.

Just now in the holding room, my Trade Minister Gita Wirjawan, reminded me that this meeting is famously known as MC9. And he cautioned me that discussions in this MC9 Ministerial meeting would be much more lively than this solemn opening ceremony. Although we can all anticipate a dynamic discussion in the next four days, I do believe that we have a shared commitment to strengthen the multilateral trading system.

Our meeting today is very timely as the world economy is still struggling to recover from the global recession. The effects of which are adversely impacting trade and therein, world trade remains at historic lows.

And we are meeting today, just after we came very close to an historic agreement in Geneva. An agreement that would have allowed us to harvest the "first crops" of the Doha Development Agenda — the DDA.

Here in Bali, we have an opportunity to work together to achieve what we missed in Geneva. We have an opportunity to demonstrate to the world that we are ready to reinvigorate global trade. And we also have an opportunity to lay the path to make global trade easier, more fair and more inclusive for all. By doing so, we will contribute to the efforts in strengthening the credibility and confidence of our multilateral trading system.

Although we were still short of reaching the finish line in Geneva, still, we have gained much. We have agreed to carry reforms that will help open up markets for least developed countries. We have also prepared the ground for far-reaching agreements that will bring new hope for the Doha Development Agenda.

Therefore, I have high hope on you to make a significant progress on your negotiations in Bali. There is something about this island in the history books of international negotiations. When in Bali, negotiators seem able to find ways out of many tough negotiations, for example during the climate change conference in 2007. Likewise, here in 2003, ASEAN Leaders were also able to reach consensus on the way forward for the ASEAN cooperation through Bali Concord II.

In addition to the charm of Bali, I also have faith that the groundwork that Indonesia has prepared for this meeting can have positive results in this MC9. In this regard, I wish to congratulate the

Chair for this Conference, Gita Wirjawan and the Co-Chairs — Mr. Stephen Green of the United Kingdom, Ms. Magali Silva Velarde-Alvarez of Peru, and Mr. Francois Kanimba of Rwanda for their tireless work.

Negotiators in Geneva have made tremendous progress identifying outcomes that could help unlock the Doha Development Agenda. But negotiators can only do so much. Now, when all Ministers responsible for trade are here, we must make good use of our strong **political will**. We must put in place a work program that will deliver the outcomes the world is waiting for. And all of us must find **more flexibility** — for the good of the WTO, for the good of our economies and for the good of our peoples around the world.

It has been eighteen years since the WTO was created. For twelve of those years, we have been negotiating under the Doha Development Agenda, and we have yet able to complete it. But this year's progress in tackling many difficult issues has shown us that success is within reach. Should we fail to clinch a Bali package, we will have lost an opportunity to take a giant step towards conclusion of the Doha Round.

Failure is not an option. Instead, let us focus on the opportunities, at times rare opportunities. The opportunity for us to reconcile our differing views and agree on new trade rules that will boost the global economy. The opportunity for us to strengthen the WTO as an institution for a fairer, more open and more equitable international trading system. And, the opportunity to regain the trust, hope, credibility, and confidence for the WTO as a trade negotiating forum.

None of us has any illusion about the magnitude of our task ahead. Multilateral trade negotiations are, by their very nature, challenging. Meeting of minds from many different points of view, in such a large membership, is unquestionably hard. But while the task may be challenging, the potential rewards are great.

I believe being a negotiator, we all share the view that in negotiations, however hard they may be, one can always find an opportunity. And I stress **that** finding an opportunity for the benefit of everyone is an art of the possible. Therefore, we must build on this year's achievements and deliver new outcomes in the months to come for the sake of our farmers, our businesses, and our peoples.

When negotiators are wrestling with the DDA in Geneva, many countries are pursuing bilateral or regional trade deals as an alternative means to liberalize trade. Proliferation of these preferential trade deals has given rise to overlapping and often competing bilateral and regional agreements. In the absence of a successful multilateral trading system, some countries will no doubt continue to pursue such deals.

In the final analysis, the multilateral trading system works for all of us because it is built on principles of transparency, fairness and opportunity. We all share the view that multilateral trade liberalization offers the greatest benefit for the greatest number. Moreover, boosting trade multilaterally provides new and diversified sources of economic growth. This, in return creates employment and higher paying jobs, and benefits consumers through lower prices and wider product choice.

While non-discrimination and an equal voice for all are laudable principles, we must also be mindful of members' relative capabilities, strengths and weaknesses.

But helping the weak grow strong will bring benefits to all. It will increase the size of the marketplace. It will strengthen both supply and demand for goods and services. And it will also contribute to regional and global stability. Stability that is so important for the private sector to flourish.

In a nutshell, what we have been doing is investing in the development dimension of international trade. This principle is enshrined in the Doha Development Agenda when it was launched in 2001. Now it is time for us to put our words into action. We need a rules-based multilateral trading system that works for developed and developing countries alike. Success in Bali will demonstrate to the world that we are not going to leave developing countries behind.

Trade is a critical part of our global efforts to eradicate poverty. Over the past thirty years, we have witnessed major improvements in global prosperity and living standards. But despite our progress, poverty still scars the lives of many people throughout the world. The situation is particularly severe in developing countries.

Despite our progress, 1.2 billion people continue to live in extreme poverty. In the long run, economies open to trade and investment do better than those closed ones. Trade reduces poverty and helps lift millions out of hardship and debt. In developing countries, the proportion of debt service to export revenue has fallen to 3 percent—down from nearly 12 percent at the start of the millennium.

While we welcome these trends, we need to do more. Giving poor countries an opportunity to trade gives them an opportunity to develop. We must seize our opportunity. Our success here in Bali will provide the necessary impetus for an expansion of global trade, that in the end, will help reduce poverty around the world.

As we strive to come to agreement here in Bali, we should not view one another as competitors. We should reject the notion of “North against South”— a term that exaggerates our differences rather than our complementarities. We should view one another as **partners**. Over the past thirty years, developing countries have been the main drivers of growth in trade. Developing countries now account for around half of world trade, up from only 34 per cent in 1980. Global trade requires the participation of all.

Here in Bali, and in the broader Doha Development Agenda, balance is key. Balancing the needs and expectations of all members, so as to create a more fair multilateral trading system. The WTO's principle of special and differential treatment is critical in this regard. This principle allows developing and least developed countries the policy space they need, to develop their economies.

The other key to unlocking progress in our negotiations is flexibility. Pursuing the national interest at all cost, without flexibility or compromise, is doomed to failure. Such rigidity will lead to no outcome, **where** everyone loses. We lose, not because the WTO will disappear, but because we will have lost an opportunity to make much needed reforms. And I fear that should we let this opportunity slip, it is developing countries that will lose out the most.

I believe this sentiment is also shared by many world leaders. I can say this because when I participated in G20, and when Indonesia hosted APEC, ASEAN, and East Asia Summit, leaders have invariably asserted the significance of seeking a successful MC9 outcome in 2013.

So, stay focused and finish our work successfully. And later on, you deserve to get yourself “lost” in this beautiful island to celebrate your achievement. I believe you will not find it easy to decide, whether to go uphill or just relax on the beach. You must then negotiate within yourself.

Let me conclude by calling on you — the Ministers and negotiators here in this room.

You have worked hard. You have made more progress than many critics of the WTO thought possible. Now you need to translate your progress into concrete outcomes. We must build on our progress and consolidate the goodwill that has emerged over recent months. We cannot afford to let our hard-fought gains fade away.

We have already agreed to some substantial outcomes, and in particular, I refer to those that will benefit least developed countries. But we can do much more. Let us work towards our common interest and unlock the impasse of the Doha Round.

The international trading system is at a critical point in its long and challenging history. In the event of prolonged stagnation, there is a risk that the business community could lose faith in our ability to conclude the multilateral trade negotiations.

We cannot allow this to happen. We have done much of the hard work. We are close to an historic achievement. Together, with our collective political will, let us seize this opportunity. This is our chance to rebuild the credibility and confidence to our precious trade negotiating forum.

And finally, I call on you all to take advantage of this rare opportunity. We must work together constructively, flexibly and creatively to find a win-win solution on some pressing issues, in particular on agriculture. I hope that this package is not confined to only agriculture, rather it is more comprehensive as to include issues related to trade facilitation and least developed countries or LDCs.

I am confident by working the extra miles, we will be able to agree on a Bali package that will pave the way for the conclusion of the Doha Development Agenda.

*Wassalamu'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.
Om Shanti, Shanti, Shanti Om.*
