

Closing Remarks of the Honourable Minister of Commerce, Industry and Trade, Senator Jabulile Mashwama, on the occasion of the Third Meeting of Trade Ministers of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs): 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2009

- Honourable Ministers of Trade from Landlocked Developing Countries and their Representatives;
- Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps;
- Representatives from International Organisations;
- Distinguished Delegates;
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is my honour and pleasure to once again express our appreciation on behalf of His Majesty's Government for having given us this great opportunity to host the Third Meeting of Trade Ministers of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs). During the past two days we have deliberated on the many issues that affect us as Landlocked Developing Countries. I am sure that the declaration that we have adopted here, namely, "***The Ezulwini Declaration***" will be a useful document that we can take forward as we prepare ourselves for the 7<sup>th</sup> WTO Regular Ministerial Meeting scheduled next month in Geneva. For those who may not be aware, *Ezulwini* means *Heaven* and for us with this

outcome, out of Heaven a Declaration has been born. Similarly, your active participation and input in this meeting will contribute tremendously towards the programme we have set ourselves in the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action.

As we are all fully aware, the Landlocked Developed Countries do not represent a formal sub-category of countries in many different fora, including the World Trade Organisation. However, it is heartening to note that even without this formal recognition, our issues are beginning to find a place in different agendas of these organisations. In this regard, we would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude for the coordination role that is being played by the United Nations Office of the High Representatives for Least Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UNOHRLLS) in advancing our agenda as Landlocked Developing Countries. In addition, I would like to recognize the Foreign Minister of Paraguay, who has been tireless in his efforts in bringing the challenges of our group to the fore in every given opportunity and forum.

I would like also to recognize our moderators who have efficiently and professionally guided our different sessions.

Throughout our deliberations they demonstrated patience and may I request that we give them a round of applause.

I would like to specifically recognize and applaud the leadership of the Mission of Paraguay in Geneva and the Mission of Mali in New York in steering our group and making sure that our diplomats stationed in these cities are kept abreast on issues of importance to our group.

To all our cooperating partners that are present here, I would like on behalf of our group of Landlocked Developing Countries to express our appreciation for the technical assistance they continue to provide our countries. In particular, I would like to recognize the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which has sponsored the majority of our delegates to this meeting. I would like to urge them to continue to provide us with the necessary requisite technical assistance that would help us to deal with the new and emerging challenges as a result of climate change.

This meeting would not have been successful without the cooperation and the understanding we have received from all of

you, Honourable Ministers and Distinguished Delegates. At this juncture, I would like to reassure you that where things did not go according to your expectations in the organisation of this meeting, we fully take responsibility as a host and just to mention that there is always ample room for improvement on our part.

In conclusion, I would like to make a special plea to our group, that as we end this meeting, let us continue to maintain the solidarity and cohesion that we have demonstrated in the past two days. I am aware that as Landlocked Developed Countries, we have configured in different economic negotiating groups. Some of us here today, are classified as Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and whilst others as Developing Countries. This categorization may change, but our being landlocked may not change, unless something very dramatic happens. The point I am trying to make is that let us show solidarity and don't behave like a chameleon who changes colour to fit in any environment.

I would like to wish you all safe journey home and we hope to see you back soon in Swaziland and I thank you for your attention.