Distinguished Ministers of Trade, Ministries of Foreign Affairs, High Representative, Ambassadors and Heads of Delegations, Ladies and Gentlemen

In this second intervention, let me refer to subjects of particular interest to Paraguay. I would like to briefly focus on development matters, trade negotiations, investment, science and technology, transport and communication. Sustainable and inclusive development of our people has been incorporated as an essential premise into institutional plans of successive governments of my country. Poverty reduction, the guarantee of fundamental rights such as access to education, food, promotion of life quality and the social, political and economic participation, rule the actions of the Government based on its internal and external policies.

We consider that trade is a significant tool to fulfill these objectives. The economic view of my government is to promote a structural transformation of the economy, to diversify production, opening and guaranteeing access to external and internal markets and fully connect to the outside world in order to allow the free flow of our production.

In this sense, we give great importance to trade negotiations, either within a regional or multilateral framework. We support that the establishment of clear rules, encourage development and trade and will bring us to better integration into the global economy. As a great producer and exporter of agricultural products, we give special attention to agricultural negotiations. We think that if we can negotiate better market access and remove trade distorting measures, such as subsidies and concealed protectionism, we will be able to offer our rural population, representing around 45% of our inhabitants, better opportunities to improve their life quality.

Other fundamental principles we uphold in this area are the adherence to international standards, the performance of scientific tests for laying down rules, we are very concerned about the proliferation of private standards. We consider these three elements mainly looking for giving predictability to international trade.

Trade facilitation is another area of great importance in negotiations to reduce costs and guarantee predictability for our merchandise arrival to the corresponding destination. Likewise, an opportunity to create a legal framework that allows the free circulation of our goods is essential. In this sense, we devote many resources to the possibility of guaranteeing regional systems that allow free circulation and commercialization of energy, a highly competitive sector in my country. Therefore, in multilateral negotiations on trade facilitation, we support Freedom of Transit proposals for fixed infrastructure aimed at commercialization of energy goods.
In view of diversification, we are interested in taking opportunities offered by rendering of services, whose commercialization does not influence our geographical location. To that end, we understand that professional training of our population will let us offer quality and competitive services. This sector, however, is weakly regulated in my country. Therefore, we should work in the establishment of clear rules that may benefit development and will guarantee quality to consumers.

Thus, we express our need of support from the international community in order to conclude agreements, gain market access as well as to mobilize resources for project developments. We are convinced that trade plays a significant source of financing, as does foreign direct investment and cooperation with reimbursable and/or non-reimbursable financing.

We appreciate that our group has an especial recognition in the Aid for Trade initiative, as we need it, to reduce the effects of the landlocked condition in our competitiveness and take full advantage of the international trade benefits. I reiterate our welcome to the fourth global review and its emphasis on value chains. This shall allow a better analysis of interrelationships among foreign investment, the private sector role and knowledge transfer.

Likewise, UNCTAD work related to investment mapping and cooperation in the preparation of investment guides highly contribute to our efforts of being attractive to investment currents. We see with great interest the work performed by UNCTAD referring to science and technology. This work may contribute to our objective of promoting innovation in national companies and establishing a national science center. The technological innovation is a sector that may generate more employment and a greater economic growth in our country.

In addition to clear international rules and productive restructuring, I have to refer to connectivity related to transport and infrastructure. Our products should have guaranteed circulation, with an integral transport system that is sustainable through time, avoiding traffic congestions through the negotiation of regional solutions. In Latin America, we have an ambitious project for the infrastructure integration. However, its execution presents disjointed advances due to difficulties in mobilizing resources, find by less developed economies, which are particularly the landlocked ones, in addition to the lack of political will of certain stakeholders.

We should also mention the particular needs of Landlocked Developing Countries referring to connectivity in communication networks, such as access to the international optic fiber network. This is a challenge that also requires a great resource mobilization and international agreements. This connectivity shall guarantee that the commercialization of services may not be affected by distance.

Finally, let me conclude my intervention expressing our will to keep working in pursuit of our interests, and highlight the strength we are able to achieve by coordinating our efforts.