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Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia

Opening Remarks

by

Mr. Luvsanvandan Bold, Foreign Minister of Mongolia

**at the High-Level International Workshop on “WTO Agreement on Trade
Facilitation: Implications for LLDCs”**

2 June 2014

Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia,

Excellency Mr. Robert Sichinga, Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry, Zambia, Chair of the global coordination bureau of the Group of LLDCs,

Excellency Ambassador Mwaba P. Kasese Bota, Zambia, Chair of the global coordination bureau of the Group of LLDCs,

Excellency Mr Juan Esteban Aguirre Martinez, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Paraguay to the United Nations in Geneva, and LLDC Group Coordinator on Trade and Development,

Excellency Gyan Chandra Acharya, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States,

Distinguished Representatives,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I think today is the one of the sunny days in Mongolia. Good morning to you all. I am pleased to welcome you in Ulaanbaatar.

This is a matter of pleasure to see the esteemed representatives of the LLDCs community. The Government of Mongolia is proud to host this High-Level International Workshop on “WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation: Implications for LLDCs” in collaboration with the International Think Tank for LLDCs and the UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States. Your presence once again indicates the particular importance given by your respective governments to this Workshop.

Indeed this is the major event on trade facilitation following the 9th WTO Ministerial Meeting in Bali in December 2013, and very timely one for preparation of the Second UN Conference on LLDCs.

The international community has acquired a comprehensive platform to address the specific development issues of LLDCs in 2003 by the Almaty Program of Action. As a milestone for LLDCs, the Almaty Program of Action has outlined overarching priorities including fundamental transit

policy, infrastructure development and trade. Today, the problems of LLDCs are prominent in the international development debates and forums, ranging from the Millennium Development Goals to the multilateral trade negotiations. Trade facilitation is the prime trade policy Instrument in the WTO to achieve gains from international trade and reinvigorate trade competitiveness.

We have an ample opportunity, here in Ulaanbaatar, to review progress made in improving trade facilitation, examine major achievements and constraints experienced, discuss to grow from being land-locked into being land-linked and explore useful ingredients to work ahead as per the LLDCs agenda.

Moreover, I do hope that we will also discuss new and emerging challenges and opportunities for LLDCs including issues on economic diversification, private and public partnerships, promoting "green" economic activities and investment through creation of a conducive business environment, use of clean technologies, mitigating climate change, accession to WTO, South-South and tripartite cooperation and ensuring more benefits for LLDCs from international initiatives such as Aid for Trade.

Mongolian saying goes that *Gathered magpies are stronger than tigers, marching one after another.* Similarly we all agree that land-locked countries need to combine our efforts so that have an excellent analytical capacity and researches to explain the constraints and emerging challenges to the international community, to identify policy recommendations and actions for enabling LLDCs to participate in the global trade and to realize full potential for sustainable and inclusive development. It will help us to improve awareness of LLDC's acute issues and strengthen our hands in trade negotiations. It will help us to build the world better. To that end, as a landlocked developing country, Mongolia initiated establishment of International Think Tank for LLDCs, which supported by the Group. And the Reform Government of Mongolia is committed to make it venue where scholars and academicians could work together.

Taking this opportunity, we call on fellow landlocked developing countries, to sign and ratify, at their earliest convenience, the Multilateral Agreement on the Establishment of the International Think Tank for the LLDCs in Ulaanbaatar in order to bring it to full operation. We invite the World Bank, regional development banks, organizations of the UN system and other interested parties to support this International Think Tank.

I have no doubt that the outcomes of the Ulaanbaatar workshop will substantially contribute to the Second Review Conference in November this year.

I wish you all fruitful and constructive deliberations.

Thank you very much.