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# PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE ON THE WTO

*Organized jointly by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the European Parliament*

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## **Sixteenth session of the Conference Steering Committee\***

*3 October 2007, IPU Headquarters, Geneva*

### **STATEMENT**

Intensive discussions held in September have yielded some tangible progress in the Doha Round. Agreements on modalities on agriculture and non-agricultural market access (NAMA) remain crucial for the Round to conclude within a reasonable time frame and to deliver on its development commitment.

The information on the ongoing talks, shared with us by the negotiators of the four major trading powers and the chairman of the Agriculture negotiating group, stand proof of the fact that convergence is still possible, albeit very challenging.

In the last months, some political actors have raised the possibility of a minimalist "Doha-lite" package, calibrating ambitions against sensitivities of countries and trade blocks, as a realistic way forward in saving the Round. The case for a realizable Doha package could be even stronger in view of the looming systemic implications of a failure.

As members of parliament with a mandate to oversee and encourage government action in the field of international trade, we reiterate our call for an ambitious package: a compromise lies on the path of mutual, balanced and fair concessions, taking into account the overall world economic landscape and the enormous risks involved in a continued stalemate. Therefore, we urge our governments to spare no efforts in ensuring an equitable and development-oriented outcome of the Doha Round. As parliamentarians we restate our commitment to provide our firm backing to this process..

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\* Members of the Steering Committee from the following countries, regional parliamentary assemblies and international organizations were present at the session: Belgium, Canada, China, France, Germany, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Kenya, Mauritius, Mexico, Namibia, Niger, South Africa, Uruguay, Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, European Parliament, Inter-Parliamentary Union, and the Secretariat of the World Trade Organization.