1. We, parliamentarians assembled in Geneva for the annual session of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO, welcome the signs of renewed energy and broader engagement by WTO Members in the negotiations on the Doha Development Agenda. The recently injected political momentum has given rise to the hope that across-the-board negotiations can be accelerated, finally bringing the Round to a successful, ambitious, comprehensive, fair and balanced conclusion in compliance with the original mandate. We encourage WTO Members to seize the narrow but real window of opportunity to conclude the Round by the end of 2011.

2. Convinced that multilateralism remains the best option to harness globalization and manage interdependence, we reaffirm our commitment to the universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and fair multilateral trading system as embodied in the WTO.

3. International trade is a powerful engine of sustained economic growth and is essential for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Against the background of a deep and widespread economic downturn, the multilateral trading system has proven its value. The very existence of WTO disciplines, rules and binding mechanisms played a crucial role in weathering the threat of protectionism and jumpstarting the economic recovery.

4. The needs and interests of developing countries, and in particular the least developed countries, are at the heart of the Doha Development Agenda, which seeks to redress asymmetries and imbalances affecting them. We call upon developed countries that have not yet done so to provide immediate, predictable, duty-free and quota-free market access on a lasting basis for all products originating from the least developed countries. Emerging economies should also contribute to this process, assuming a share of responsibility for the global governance that is commensurate with their role as the driving force behind the economic recovery.
5. The Doha Round is premised on the consensus that, to be concluded satisfactorily, the negotiations should advance in all domains under a single undertaking. Recognizing the paramount importance of progress in areas such as agriculture, non-agricultural market access, services, rules and trade facilitation, as well as the Dispute Settlement Understanding, we call on WTO Members to accelerate their work also on special and differential treatment provisions, the development-related mandate concerning the TRIPS Agreement, implementation-related issues and concerns, transfer and dissemination of technology, and access to knowledge for the benefit of developing countries.

6. We believe it is important to ensure that market opening and fair trade liberalization go hand in hand with environmental and social objectives. Drawing from the lessons of the financial and economic crisis, we also see the need for greater coherence between the different segments of global governance, including the WTO, the Bretton Woods institutions and the United Nations. Rebalancing the multilateral trading system in favour of sustainable development is inconceivable without better coordination between these multilateral organizations, which share to a large extent the same institutional objectives, norms and mandates.

7. In order to make the WTO a truly universal organization, we underscore the requirement to facilitate the accession process for all developing countries, and in particular the least developed countries, and to avoid the trap of multi-tiered membership, subject to different levels of obligations. We call for the removal of political obstacles that stand in the way of ensuring the inclusiveness and universal character of WTO membership.

8. The protracted Doha Round negotiations have underscored a systemic need to improve the functioning of the WTO as a negotiating forum. It is necessary to rethink its processes and decision-making structures that demonstrate less-than-optimum performance. We encourage WTO Members to give thorough consideration to relevant ideas and proposals, progressively forging a consensus on ways to reform the Organization. We are persuaded that this should be done without undermining the democratic legitimacy of the system, in particular for weaker members, and by devising a modus operandi that can reconcile efficiency and equity in negotiations.

9. We are convinced of the need for a strong and effective parliamentary dimension to the WTO and welcome the fact that, for the first time ever, an annual session of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO will take place on the premises of this intergovernmental organization. Parliamentarians, as elected representatives of the people, have a duty to provide effective oversight of international trade negotiations, ensuring their transparency and fairness. It is also their responsibility to apprise their constituents of the numerous advantages of a multilateral trading system based on meaningful reciprocity and balanced trade-offs.

10. The road to fairer and more equitable international trade starts with the conclusion of the Doha Round. We call on our parliamentary colleagues around the world to use all the means at their disposal to convey to their respective governments our shared sense of urgency concerning the present state of WTO negotiations. It is imperative to change gear, fuelling and sustaining the momentum in order to close the deal by the end of the current year.