



The Hon Craig Emerson MP Minister for Trade

**WTO Ministerial Conference
Geneva
15 December 2011**

Ministers' Pledge Against Protectionism Press Conference

Dr Emerson's Opening Remarks

Thank you very much for coming; there's obviously a high level of interest in the statement we are making today.

I'm Craig Emerson, the Minister of Trade for Australia.

We're gathered here because we are a group of members of the World Trade Organization that constitute, in GDP terms, about two-thirds of the global gross domestic product generated each year.

We are concerned about the resurgence of protectionist pressures during this time of fragile economic recovery, and we are determined to resist those protectionist pressures.

We want to open our economies more to trade, because through trade more jobs and prosperity are created around the world.

But while we are opening our economies through new approaches to the Doha Round, it is crucial at this time in particular of economic volatility, particularly in some northern hemisphere economies, that we restate and reaffirm our commitment to resisting protectionism in all its forms.

We are, therefore, committed to supporting the anti-protectionism message that will be articulated at this, the 8th Ministerial Conference, with an additional pledge.

And that's why we're here today: to make that additional pledge to fight all forms of protectionism in the strongest terms.

We, therefore, commit to refrain from raising new barriers to trade in goods and services, imposing new export restrictions, or implementing WTO-inconsistent measures in all areas, including those that stimulate exports.

We also reaffirm our undertaking to comply with WTO agreements, as well as to continue to ensure transparency and predictability in implementing measures that affect trade.

In addition, we commit to taking steps to roll back any protectionist measures introduced since the start of the global financial crisis in 2008.

Furthermore, we will continue to exercise maximum restraint in implementing measures that may be considered to be consistent with WTO provisions if they have a significant protectionist effect, and promptly rectify such measures where implemented.

We call on other interested WTO Members to join us in making this pledge, which can be reviewed and further strengthened if necessary, at the WTO 9th Ministerial Council.

If some of that language sounds familiar to you, it is because it is the Leaders' language that was adopted at both the G20 meeting in Cannes and the APEC meeting. And we are committing to the G20 and APEC language adopted by Leaders.

I will now pass over to Bruno Ferrari [Economy Minister, Mexico], who wishes to make a few remarks, as do a number of other colleagues.

And then we'll be open for questions.