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MOROCCO

Statement by H.E. Mr Mustapha Mansouri
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I should like first of all, on my own behalf and on that of my delegation, to convey my sincere gratitude to the Government and people of Qatar for the excellent organization of this Fourth Ministerial Conference of the WTO and for the warm reception and hospitality extended to us since our arrival in your beautiful country.

My thanks go also to the Director-General and to all the Members of the WTO Secretariat, who have been unstinting in their endeavours to create all the conditions needed to facilitate the progress of our deliberations, which we hope will culminate in the adoption of a programme of work for the years ahead.

Undoubtedly, this Conference comes at a time of great turbulence in the international arena, marked by a distinct world economic slowdown that has been under way for some months and has quite recently been compounded by the effects of the events of 11 September in the United States of America. This economic climate could well slow down the process of world trade liberalization unless all our countries collectively undertake to reaffirm our commitment to a liberal, fair and equitable multilateral trading system.

We believe that we have completed significant stages in moving towards the orderly and well-considered liberalization of world trade. The Doha Conference should therefore be seen as an ideal opportunity to renew our political commitments vis-à-vis the WTO and, more than this, to forge ahead in the same direction in view of the proven benefits of such liberalization for growth, development and the well-being of peoples. Yet it is now more urgent than ever for these benefits to be equitably distributed amongst all countries, a goal that has still to be attained.

For several months, an intensive process preparatory to the Doha Conference has been under way in Geneva. In this arduous task, we have been careful to make good use of the invaluable lessons learned from the Seattle experience so as to arrive at a suitable methodology for the pursuit of our work and to determine the content of our future agenda.

This methodology, which reconciled concern with transparency and the imperative of efficiency, has given us here in Doha a solid basis on which we are working intensively so as to reach a consensus that will reflect the interests of all WTO Members. I take this opportunity to pay tribute to the Director-General of the WTO, the Chairman of the General Council and to all the Ambassadors in Geneva who have worked untiringly for months, at times even at the expense of their own family obligations, to prepare for these new talks.

As regards content, all the WTO Members have become aware of the need to give priority to the topics that require further fine-tuning and readaptation so as to make it possible to "digest" the results of the Uruguay Round, and then to examine the other topics more concerned with bringing the

multilateral trading system into line with the new realities of world trade whilst making allowances for the range of interests and development levels of all Members.

Therefore, the option of a global round of multilateral trade negotiations has proved the best suited to respond satisfactorily to all these concerns.

In the light of the foregoing, Morocco has stated its support for the launch of this Round, which must be based on a global and balanced approach that reflects the interests of all WTO Members, and, to echo Mr Mike Moore's words, makes development issues central to all the topics discussed.

I should now like to outline my country's position on the range of topics for negotiation and at the same time to outline our assessment of the draft texts that have been submitted to us for decision.

As regards implementation-related issues and concerns, like other developing countries, Morocco is facing problems in implementing some provisions of the Uruguay Round Agreements. These concern, *inter alia*, the Agreement on Customs Valuation, specifically the single issue of *de minimis* values, and the Agreement on Trade-Related Investment Measures (TRIMs).

Morocco hoped that these concerns would meet with an adequate response in the draft decision on implementation issues that has been submitted to us for adoption here at Doha, but this has not been the case.

Nevertheless, and insofar as the draft Ministerial Decision calls for a global approach, on the basis of a proposal by the Group of 7 - including my country - which seems to satisfy all the Members and considering Morocco's culture of consensus and our belief in the success of this Conference, we could not but join in the almost unanimous support for this arrangement. Morocco will nonetheless remain attentive to the follow-up to be given to its own problems, which are amongst the priority topics to be dealt with by subsidiary bodies after Doha so as to determine appropriate action.

As for agricultural negotiations, Morocco considers that they must lead to the correction of the shortcomings still affecting world trade in agricultural products, especially by supporting all proposals aimed at substantially reducing progressive tariff levels affecting market access, reducing and eventually eliminating domestic support measures within a reasonable timeframe, and the removal of export subsidies also within a reasonable lapse of time.

Moreover, we insist on the importance of special and differential treatment, which must be considered a fundamental component of the negotiations, whether in implementing the results of these negotiations or in attaining the development objectives of developing countries relating to food security and rural development.

Morocco considers that the draft text on agriculture has been drawn up in a way that takes into account its interests in this strategic sector.

As regards trade in services, like most developing countries, Morocco insists on the need to further liberalize the movement of natural persons. A constructive initiative on the part of developed countries in this sphere will only enhance the economic development of developing countries.

Morocco welcomes the progress so far made in the negotiations on trade in services, especially the adoption of guidelines and procedures for the negotiations in March last, and it is our hope that this impetus will be maintained after our meeting.

With respect to market access for non-agricultural products, Morocco is in favour of including this topic in future negotiations, but insists that such negotiations must encompass special and differential treatment as a fundamental element.

On intellectual property, it is Morocco's opinion that the TRIPS Council has sufficiently discussed the importance of extending the additional protection accorded to geographical indications for wines and spirits to other products. Accordingly, and so as to limit unfair practices that effectively mislead the public, it is now necessary to launch negotiations aimed at extending that additional protection within the framework of the WTO's future programme.

Morocco also welcomes the initiative to submit to the Ministers for approval a separate Ministerial Declaration on Intellectual Property and Public Health (access to medicines) with a view to making the flexibility already envisaged in the TRIPs Agreement more effective and operational.

In the light of the objectives and principles of the TRIPS Agreement, Morocco is of the view that the WTO Members should have reasonable and sufficient leeway for adopting appropriate measures, compulsory licensing for instance, that would enable them effectively to pursue the goals of their national health policies.

Regarding the Singapore topics, and more specifically investment and competition, Morocco would like to see a compromise solution based on the text proposed by the Chairman of the General Council and the Director-General so as to provide simultaneously the clarifications needed in order to understand the various aspects of the relationship between trade and investment, on the one hand, and the interaction between trade and competition policy, on the other, and thus pave the way for a decision on negotiating modalities to be adopted by consensus and in full awareness of the facts at the Fifth Ministerial Conference.

Moreover, we must point out that the concept of "flexibility" must be taken into consideration so as to accommodate the situation of developing countries, especially the prevailing asymmetries between them and the developed countries.

On the environment, Morocco remains convinced that there is a degree of complementarity between the environment and the multilateral trading system and that we must redouble our efforts in these two fields so as to create a constructive synergy that will foster sustainable development. We must underline, however, that environmental protection must not be used for protectionist purposes.

In this regard, Morocco believes that the current mandate of the Committee on Trade and Environment is clear on this issue. It is therefore in favour of maintaining the work programme emanating from this mandate.

Another matter to which Morocco attaches great importance is subsidies in the maritime fisheries sector. It is in fact one of the major components of Morocco's economic activity and is of strategic importance at the social level and to sustainable development.

Aware of the vulnerability and fragility of the world's fisheries resources, and convinced of the need to adopt improved methods for exploiting them by preserving the fundamental balances of marine ecosystems, Morocco advocates the elimination of subsidies that lead to the over-exploitation of these resources and proposes the creation of a working party on subsidies accorded in the fisheries industry.

On the matter of technical cooperation and capacity-building, special and differential treatment and measures in favour of LDCs, Morocco notes with satisfaction the realism and pragmatism with which the provisions on these issues in the draft ministerial declaration have been strengthened. Aware of the significance of such accompanying measures in ensuring the success of

the various negotiations, Morocco has constantly underlined the need to review the way they currently function so as to make them more effective and operational. It goes without saying that, while we insist on making the development dimension central to our concerns, we must not fail to translate it into concrete actions.

Before concluding, I should like once again to express the hope that all the Members of our Organization will display flexibility so as to ensure the success of our Conference.

In the present situation, Morocco considers that the time-frames ahead of us will demand from WTO Members renewed efforts at adjustment and change, and above all at solidarity in order to avert any divisions that could jeopardize the cohesiveness of our Organization. We cannot afford a second failure, as that would undoubtedly damage the credibility of the WTO and raise doubts about the future of a multilateral trading system that is open and conducive to growth and development.

In our view, the draft texts before us today, the outcome of arduous work led mainly by the Director-General and the Chairman of the General Council, constitute a solid basis that has made allowances for the various sensitivities.

Let us seize this opportunity to shape the contours of a bright future for the well-being of our peoples.
