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ROMANIA

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I am honoured and pleased to have the opportunity to participate in this important meeting of the 142 WTO Members, all confident that the multilateral trading system represents a solution to many of the problems of our world today. We are also determined to improve the system, to the benefit of billions of people we represent.

My delegation has been empowered by the Romanian Government to actively contribute to a satisfactory outcome of the Ministerial Conference and we are determined to finalize the hard work conducted in Geneva during the last two years.

Romania's determination stems out of serious and steady concerns regarding the most adequate response to the complex challenges of globalization an emerging economy has to face.

After several attempts during the last decade, the Romanian economy is showing signs of equilibrium and development. Democracy is solid and social life is improving. Throughout this time, foreign trade represented the engine of development and economic restructuring. It became obvious that increasing the opportunities for our exports, opening up markets (including our own) is vital today. At the same time it is also very important to accompany freer trade with rules and terms of trade designed to ensure stability, predictability and fair trade.

We consider that these objectives are common to all WTO Members addressing thus the concerns of most of them and recognizing that rules-based free trade in an important tool for development.

More emphasis on development is a must if we want to fight instability, war, terrorism, political and social turmoil. Now, we have the opportunity to give more green light to trade, to make the rules foster fair trade and to show our determination to deepen the special and differential treatment for developing countries.

Should we consider development our core concern, there will be ways and tools to have all WTO Members taking part in the negotiations and assuming those commitments they can enforce and representing important support to their internal development programmes.

How can our Organization tackle these concerns? Is it possible to have 142 countries aboard in comprehensive, substantive and ample negotiations?

The answer we see to these questions is a positive one, while the manner seems to be a round. Most of the WTO Members are developing countries without strong industries for each economic

sector. We all are looking for opportunities to develop areas of comparative advantages, to protect infant industries and to ensure a better life for the people in our countries. To this end, a balance of the negotiations is compulsory and it would be almost impossible to reach at it in a few economic sectors. I will just take the example of agriculture where at this moment competition takes place not between products but rather between the financial capabilities of the countries.

At the same time, the large diversity of the WTO Members, their very different level of development and capacity building, the size and natural conditions are to be recognized and treated in such a way as to ensure an equal right to each of us to development and a better life.

A rules-based system represents a good answer, while a better one would be an improved system fostering fair trade. At the same time, how far should liberalization go, under a rules-based system? Only as far as no protection "wave" is induced! We all should analyse more carefully the dynamics of trade remedies cases during the last years. For sure, they are reactions of the governments to pressures from the industries, always looking for protection and better trade conditions. Still, they might hide a step-back to a liberalization measure. And were the exporters given a strong enough right to defend their interests?

Many of our concerns are covered by the proposals included in the implementation issues and these matters have to be recognized and solutions to them be identified but we have to move ahead and to take the appropriate decisions.

We represent here our governments and all of us, rich, poor, large or small are committed to act in order to increase welfare and as an element to that, to protect the health of our people. To this end, the draft document on TRIPS is relevant and goes beyond the implementation issues.

This gives us the opportunity to express our appreciation for the work done in Geneva by all Members, under a determined and committed guidance of the Chairpersons of the General Council and its specialized bodies and of the Director-General to whom we like to pay a special tribute.

The draft texts of the Ministerial Declaration, of the other documents on which decisions are to be taken represent, in our view, a good base for work here in Doha. We are determined to make our contribution to finalize these documents and to ensure that the work programme we are to establish is realistic and beneficial for all and each WTO Member.

Romania recognizes and supports both the work done in the TRIMs matters and all the other proposals of documents stressing the right and need for technical assistance for least-developed, developing and emerging economies.

As far as the Declaration on Implementation is concerned we support any decision which will bridge different flows of standpoints, with a view to fostering cooperation of all WTO Members.

The draft of the Ministerial Declaration represents a realistic signal and even if it is not too ambitious as to the area and scope for further negotiations, it shows the maturity of our Organization. We are determined to contributing to its finalization and I would like to mention one of the special interests of my delegation and this is rules for regional forms of integration. Supporting the need for newer and clearer rules on this matter we urge the Committee to finalize the examination of all agreements concluded on the base of the existing rules.

Having in mind these main ideas, concerns and goals we assure you of our consistent commitment to contributing to a successful outcome of our work, to showing flexibility whenever needed and thus to strengthening WTO and its force.

We congratulate the new WTO Members and we are prepared to work together with them to maintain the trust in the multilateral trading system. The same spirit of cooperation will guide us during the process of accession of the other candidate countries.

Let me end by thanking, through you, the Qatari authorities for the organization of this Conference. We praise your efforts and warm hospitality.
