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## JAPAN

Statement by H.E. Mr Takeo Hiranuma  
Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry

Now, at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, we all gathered here in Doha to discharge our important responsibility to maintain and promote the freedom and openness of the world today. It is our duty as Ministers to agree on a comprehensive Work Programme that the WTO should undertake from now, and decide to launch the negotiations based on a broad agenda.

Through earnest discussions over the past several years, we have come to understand that a free trading system is essential for the growth of developing countries. At the same time, we have also learned the severity of difficulties developing Members are facing. While strengthening our cooperation for capacity building, it is essential that we make further progress towards the objective of establishing a multilateral trading system, which all Members can equally benefit from, by taking into account the interests and concerns of developing Members and stocktaking the results to date on the implementation-related issues.

In addition to the issue of "trade and development" we are required to pay serious attention to other important issues, such as the environment and public health. In particular, the relation of access to medicines for such pandemics as HIV/AIDS and the TRIPS Agreement is an issue of great urgency.

The mission that we have been given here in Doha is to address these wide-ranging issues and produce visible results. We cannot afford a second failure. Since the horrifying events in 11 September, prospects for the world economy have become increasingly uncertain. As Ministers responsible for trade, we are required to cooperate more closely to provide more stability and predictability to international trade, and respond to the new challenges of the twenty-first century, which are even more complicated by the advance of globalization and information technology. In other words, it is our mission to develop and expand the WTO on a stronger foundation.

Despite such a strong sense of urgency, I am nonetheless confident that we will be able to fulfil this mission. This is because we already have a good basis for further coordination among Members laid down through the efforts of the General Council Chairman, Mr Harbinson, and the Director-General. Furthermore, we have been provided with a very pleasant venue for our discussions thanks to the thorough preparations by the Government of the State of Qatar.

In the coming days we will endeavour to launch the new round of negotiations under the comprehensive Work Programme by adopting the Ministerial Declaration. There still remain several important issues on which we have yet to reach a consensus. I believe we should try to proceed with our coordination from the following viewpoints:

Concerning agriculture and services, greater impetus will be given to the negotiations already underway in these sectors, by placing them both as part of the broad negotiating agenda. In particular, as for agriculture, it will be important to confirm, at Doha, the framework of negotiations to follow. The differences in positions of Members concerning the subject should be bridged in the subsequent negotiations.

In order to complement trade liberalization and safeguard the achievements resulting from such liberalization, it is imperative to work for necessary clarification and improvement of the rules on anti-dumping. We should bear in mind that a vast majority of Members already support this position.

Both investment and competition are new areas of interests, and we understand that some Members are reluctant to address these issues in the WTO. I believe, however, that we should aim at starting the negotiations on these two areas and try to deal with them with a challenging spirit.

I doubt that anyone would deny the importance of the issue of "trade and environment". Accordingly, further discussion should be pursued to reach a consensus on how the perspectives of sustainable development and preservation of the environment can be reflected through the negotiations.

Although not much time is left to us, we have so far been successful in narrowing down issues considerably. I am fully confident that I can share the sense of urgency, as well as the sense of duty I mentioned at the outset of my intervention, with all of the Ministers gathered here. Therefore, by showing a little more flexibility and adding our own political judgement as Ministers, I believe we can fulfil the mission tasked to us.

Finally, I should like to state Japan's strong hope for the approval of the accession of Japan's neighbours China and Chinese Taipei to the WTO and our welcome to their new membership.

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