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## MADAGASCAR

Statement by H.E. Mr. Mejamirado Razafimihary  
Minister of Industry, Trade and Development of the Private Sector

I deem it a privilege and a great honour to have the opportunity, on behalf of Madagascar, to address this august assembly of the Fifth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization.

I should like first to echo other speakers in congratulating you, Mr Chairman, on your election. Your wisdom and experience are a guarantee of success for this Ministerial Conference.

My delegation will commit itself fully to the tasks that lie ahead so that every participant may leave this Conference with the feeling that they have contributed to the goal by their will to cooperate in the best interests of all.

I should also like to congratulate and thank His Excellency the President of Mexico, as well as the Mexican Government and people, for their warm welcome to my delegation, and for the excellence of their organization in this city of Cancún, renowned for its beauty and hospitality.

Lastly, we look forward to the accession of Cambodia and Nepal, two of the least-developed countries, as Members of the WTO and welcome their participation in this Fifth Ministerial Conference.

Unlike previous rounds, Doha set itself the ambition of being a development round. One of its major objectives is to enable the developing countries, and the least-developed countries in particular, actually to benefit from the positive aspects of international trade, today the focus of much controversy and criticism.

We acknowledge the efforts of the Member States for the practical achievement of a number of objectives, particularly the Decision on TRIPS and Public Health, which bears witness to the humanism of all Members.

However, the present Ministerial Conference, which is a mid-term evaluation, cannot be dissociated from the events that have marked our world in the last two years and which prompt us to observe that:

- Chronic poverty, whatever its source, is inextricably linked to the presence of hotbeds of tension, which invariably lead to violence;
- conflicts can be resolved only within the framework of globalization and equity.

This Round affords an historic opportunity, which all of us must therefore seize, to take significant and concerted action to reduce poverty based on a comprehensive and well thought out

approach. Indeed, the universal recognition that the poor countries have the right to participate in international trade will guarantee more and better integration on a sustainable basis. Furthermore, if every Member participates to the best of its means in the weeks to come, a decisive contribution will be made to reducing poverty.

I hope that this Cancún Conference will lead to a broad consensus on the current negotiations and those to come. Such an outcome can only be an incentive to our future undertakings.

However, better integration in multilateral trade means more production and, consequently, more productive investments. Hence the need for further encouragement of direct investment flows in our economies.

With that in mind, the Government of Madagascar has just put in place bold measures, to be implemented over two years, to encourage and facilitate national and international investment:

- Exemption from all duties and taxes, including value added tax, on imports of all capital goods needed for investment;
- the possibility for foreign investors to have access to real estate.

We therefore invite you to support us and respond to our offer.

Technical assistance too is important to the integration of the least-developed countries in the multilateral trading system.

Most developing countries and least-developed countries are faced with constraints of one kind or another as regards the offers they make in order to improve their participation in international trade. Technical assistance should resolve those constraints, so that the developing and the least-developed countries cease to be isolated from international trade.

The Integrated Framework process, designed to provide aid and technical assistance to the least-developed countries as a contribution to combating poverty, needs a concrete commitment from donor countries and international organizations, including an increase in the financial resources allocated to the process. The aim is, once again, to prevent development, so much sought after, from remaining remote and intangible.

With regard to market access for agricultural products, domestic support and export subsidies, which have trade distorting effects, should be reduced substantially pending their complete elimination.

Market access for non-agricultural products should be free of tariffs and quotas for the least-developed countries. Such measures must not be devoided of substance by non-tariff arrangements.

In conclusion, we must all subscribe to those obligations under the WTO that target the objectives that we have set ourselves, in other words, we must make development the focus of the negotiations. All measures taken to that end must be in step with the poverty reduction strategies that most countries are implementing in cooperation with financial and technical partners. As the basis of balanced partnership, solidarity should be reflected in commitments that are tailored to the capacities of each participating country in order to restore confidence and hope among the developing and the least-developed countries, and so that all our peoples sense that a real balance has been achieved.