

**MULTILATERAL TRADE
NEGOTIATIONS
THE URUGUAY ROUND**

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EGYPT

Statement by H.E. Mr. Mahmoud Mohamed Mahmoud
Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade

I would first like to thank the people and Government of Morocco, under the wise guidance of His Majesty King Hassan II, for their gracious and generous hospitality in this historical and beautiful city of Marrakesh and for the excellent facilities which the Moroccan authorities have provided for the organization of this important conference.

Egypt welcomes the Final Act embodying the results of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations and the establishment of the World Trade Organization.

The Uruguay Round marks a major departure from all previous rounds of trade talks in many critical and important ways. It symbolizes the true and global participation of developing countries as equal partners where they have participated actively and constructively and not only on the basis of "Special and Differential Treatment".

We believe that our achievements during the last eight years of negotiations in the Uruguay Round will herald a new era of international economic cooperation; we look forward to a true and fair implementation of the results of our negotiations.

Egypt takes pride in playing an active rôle in this Round, not only by participating in shaping the results of these negotiations but also by taking various wide steps in pursuing ambitious economic reform and trade liberalization.

In fact this Round can only be sustained if it gives impetus to the economic reforms in developing countries taken often, if not all, on autonomous basis, whether in Africa, Asia or Latin America, in anticipation of trade liberalization that will be brought about as a result of this Round.

These autonomous economic reforms that took in consideration commitments in the Round, which were not taken without major political, social and infrastructural cost, can never be sustained without a conducive open liberal, and equitable trading system which makes room for small trading nations, especially in the developing countries.

The two most important features of this Round that have to be preserved are: first, an effective market access for products of interest to developing countries such as textiles, manufactures and agriculture, and second, an effective strong dispute settlement mechanism that safeguards this access and ensures defence against unilateralism and protectionism.

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A strong trading system is and should be the only protection for small trading nations, where everybody should abide by the same rules, and where the provisions of the Final Act we are signing, shall be respected and enforced in spirit and not only in letter.

Maintaining an open and fair multilateral trading system will help enhance growth of the world economy and the development of the economies of the developing countries through the trade-creating effects of this package.

I would like to stress an important element for Egypt in the Final Act which is the Ministerial Decision for the net food importing developing countries and the least-developed countries. It is our sincere hope that this decision will be implemented in a concrete fashion to help alleviate the cost of increased import of foodstuff on the economies of such countries.

Let me turn to the decision on Trade and Environment. Although Egypt has joined the consensus in arriving at this decision, yet we would like to stress the fact that environment policies should not be used to restrict access to developed countries markets. Environment agreed standards should only be enforced, in such a way that our economies would be able to support the costs through sufficient financial resources. We would be joining the negotiations on trade and environment with caution yet with an open mind. Agenda 21 of the Rio Conference should be the framework we are guided with, paying due attention to sustainable development of developing countries. We further hope that unilateralism and extra-territorial application of environment regulations will come to a halt after the establishment of the Committee on Trade and Environment.

The issue of "Immigration policies and its relationship with trade" and the issue of "Restricted Business Practices" are of vital importance to developing countries including Egypt. Thus, we are keen to put these issues on the work programme of the Preparatory Committee in a manner that equal their impact on these countries on the one hand and on international trade on the other.

In conclusion let us work together in a spirit of cooperation to achieve the overall objectives of this trade package and to implement it in good faith. We sincerely hope that the WTO will contribute to a rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory multilateral trading system.