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## YEMEN

Statement by H.E. Dr Khaled Rajed Sheikh Dawood  
Minister for Industry and Trade

*(Speaking as an Observer)*

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Yemen, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations and appreciation to the Government of the United States of Mexico and the Organizing Committee for their excellent arrangements, hospitality, and friendly reception. Cancún, as we all would agree, is an excellent venue for such an important international event.

I would like also to congratulate Dr Luis Ernesto Derbez Bautista, for his election as Chairman of the WTO Fifth Ministerial Conference, and the Executive Bureau, whom I believe would lead this meeting to a very successful conclusion: I equally would like to congratulate the Director-General, his colleagues at the WTO Secretariat, and the General Council Chairman for their continued efforts and dedication for preparation of this important Conference.

As delegates went back to their capitals from Doha in 2001, after a successful Fourth Ministerial Session, developing and, in particular, least-developed countries felt that their development partners were committed to assist the continuous endeavour to achieve developmental goals. The first test was the declared support to integrate LDCs into the multilateral trading system and the global economy. Doha Ministerial Conference was the first step to ensure that the world was willing to engage in multilateral trading negotiations, taking into account the needs of its less fortunate Members. The Cancún Ministerial is the real test ground for such a courageous step.

The Fifth WTO Ministerial Conference comes at a crucial juncture, as negotiations on many issues have made some progress, while others need stronger political will to make the necessary progress to reach the Doha Development Agenda's goals, as expressed by the Doha Ministerial Declaration.

LDCs, in particular, are looking forward to more just settlement of many issues of interest to their under-developed economies. Special and differential treatment, technical assistance and capacity-building, and accession are high on their agenda. More attention is needed to address these issues and other LDCs concerns. Dhaka Declaration and LDCs Negotiating Position for the Doha Development Agenda need to be taken seriously, if LDCs are to be fully and justly integrated in the MTS.

Accession to the WTO, in particular, is of major concern to several LDCs, Yemen included. Emphasis on facilitating and accelerating their accession have been repeated in many occasions, but remains difficult to achieve as envisaged in many Declarations, Initiatives and Decisions.

On this occasion, we congratulate Cambodia and Nepal for the conclusion of their accession negotiations, being the first LDCs to become Members of WTO since its establishment in 1995, after long difficult years of negotiations. Meantime, we are looking forward to seeing more LDCs accessions' finalization before the next session of the WTO Ministerial. This would only be made possible through the full adherence to the letter and spirit of the General Council's decision on "Guidelines on Accession of LDCs". Moreover, bilateral negotiations of acceding LDCs should not contradict the same.

We equally look forward to seeing Arab countries accession moving smoothly through, without unnecessary delays or obstacles.

As you are aware, Yemen, as an LDC, has applied for WTO membership in 2000. We expect to begin accession negotiations in the very near future. However, when people hear stories about the accession process and difficult negotiating pressures placed upon small acceding countries, people become more worrisome on the prospects of their own country's prospects, and we cannot ignore their concerns. Support and understanding of our development partners during accession negotiations are very critical, and Yemen is looking forward for such valuable support.

Yemen has started doing her homework since 1995, when a comprehensive Economic, Financial, and Administrative Reform Programme was embarked upon with the support of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. Trade liberalization was an integral part of this Programme. Trade, investment legislations and procedures, and in particular customs, were simplified and streamlined.

We thank our development partners for their continued efforts to support our endeavour to integrate in the global economy. Their commitments are highly appreciated, and we are looking forward to seeing these commitments being delivered in the due course of accession.

We equally appreciate the contributions made to the Global Trust Fund and the Integrated Framework process. However, we would like to see more funds channelled to implement the DTIS Action Plans for participating LDCs, Yemen included. We welcome the Director-General's report on paragraph 41 of the Doha Ministerial Conference on Technical Assistance and Capacity-Building, and looking forward for more enhanced and targeted assistance, particularly during the accession process.

Finally, I sincerely wish this Ministerial Conference the success it deserves, as a mid-term review for the ongoing negotiations. Hoping that it would come up with the necessary decisions to move the negotiating agenda forward to reach its ultimate goal. Such goal, however, needs to address the development dimension and concerns of developing and LDCs, to deserve the title of the "Doha Development Agenda".

Looking forward to a very successful meeting and responsible decisions on all issues at stake in the current negotiations.

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