

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

WT/MIN(01)/ST/136
12 November 2001

(01-5733)

MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
Fourth Session
Doha, 9 - 13 November 2001

Original: English

MOLDOVA

Statement Circulated by H.E. Mr Marian Lupu
Deputy Minister of Economy

It is a great pleasure to be here today in this crucial time for the WTO and for the international community.

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Moldova, I have the honour to express my most sincere congratulations for the organization and holding of the fourth WTO Ministerial Conference held in Doha. It is the first time that my country, which recently joined the WTO, participates in a Ministerial Conference as a member State. The WTO is an organization, which has worked to expand world trade and to promote economic development with the aim of increasing the living standards of the people around the world.

We are confident that the development of multilateral trading will contribute to the well-being of citizens of all member States and will play a major and fundamental role in their economic success and development. Moldova would like to consolidate its role in this process.

In this context, we fully support the launching of a new round of negotiations in trade and support the draft Ministerial Declaration as a basis for this negotiation transmitted by the Director-General and the Chairman of the General Council. The new round meets the interests and objectives of the Republic of Moldova and now we must adopt decisions not only in order to preserve the multilateral trading system but also to ensure economic development and growth in the new millennium. We also believe that the full implementation of the existing WTO Agreements have to be accorded a core role.

The Government of Moldova has adopted and is implementing currently a major programme of reforms for the transition from a centrally planned to a market economy, based on liberalized and well-regulated commercial policy. Moldova has an open economy, liberalized trade and no export subsidies. Currently its exports and imports, for geographical and historical reasons, are very much dependent on traditional markets. As a Member we hope that Moldova will diversify its commercial and economic relations, increasing the investments flow, for a wider and deeper integration into the world economy.

Our major interests in the new round of negotiations are focused on agriculture, which plays a major role in Moldova's economy. According to World Bank statistics its share in GDP is 25 per cent, accounting for more than 60 per cent of overall employment. We hope that the results of the negotiations will lead to the significant liberalization of trade in agriculture, especially through the reduction of export subsidies and other forms of agricultural support,

We support the position of those countries with economies in transition with respect to proposals for commitments in agriculture related to market access and share non-trade concerns expressed by many member States in the context of further negotiations in agriculture. Moldova fully

supports the idea of establishment of a multilateral system for notifying and registering geographical indications for wines and spirits, which, in our opinion, will contribute to the enforcement of additional protection.

Moldova is a low-income country. In the year 2000 GDP represented only US\$350 per capita and with very high level of external debt. Therefore, Moldova strongly supports the inclusion of the examination of the relationship between trade, debt and finance in the Work Programme.

In the process of accession to the WTO Moldova did not receive the status of a developing country in spite of its relatively low level of economic development and the small size of its economy. We have no intention to renegotiate the results of its accession, but support the idea of introducing fair criteria of classification of Members within the WTO according to their level of development.

We consider that Moldova has already made substantial market access commitments, sometimes going far beyond those that had been made during the Uruguay Round, therefore, these commitments and further commitments resulting from the new round might have serious consequences on its economic development creating imbalance and reasoned concern for us. Moldova in common with other newly acceded countries will seek appropriate flexibilities and accommodation of its interests in the further process of the negotiations.

The Republic of Moldova has a particular interest in participating at the negotiations in the area of services, especially Mode 4 of services supply, an objective set out in the draft Ministerial Declaration.

At the same time, the Moldovan delegation will support discussions and negotiations in the field of investments and e-commerce.

We stand for preserving and development of special and differential treatment for developing countries.

We are entirely confident that the decisions, which will be taken at this Conference, will contribute to the enhancement of commerce, investments, employment and national welfare of all WTO member States. In this historically important event, everyone should realize, especially countries with small economies like Moldova, that the individual interests of the member States and their future can be protected only in the framework of a well-established legal system, as provided by WTO and by a new round of multilateral trade negotiations. We have to do everything possible to put into practice the decisions, which will arise out of the new round of negotiations.
