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SUDAN

Statement by H.E. Mr Badereldin Suliman
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the WTO

(Speaking as an Observer)

At the outset, may I on behalf of the Sudan delegation pay our respect and gratitude to the Government and people of Mexico. We also extend our respect and appreciation to the Director-General and his assistants and staff for the excellent preparations for this Conference.

We are hopeful that the Fifth Conference of Cancún shall herald greater success in the fulfillment of Doha promises. Should political realities prejudice the capacity to meet the missed datelines, we are certain that the Cancún deliberation shall pursue a diligent and sincere effort to keep the trade talks alive and well on track. We the developing nations are setting our sights high, aspiring for a new era of globalization characterized by ethical ethos, equity, inclusion and sustainable development.

According to the Economist "by the year 2015 the World Bank reckons, a successful Doha Round could lift 144 million people out of poverty". Trade Representative Mr Robert Zoellick sums up the compelling aspiration of the poor by his remarks that "the WTO should customize solutions to address particular problems of development" afflicting the poor. Such customized solutions must address, no doubt, the plight of agriculture in the least-developed countries. It must address the severe problem of:

- High income risks and uncertainty
- Lack of diversified production
- Low productivity
- Unrealized potential
- Scarce inputs, poor logistics and skills.

But above all the less-developed farming societies aspire for protection from international vagaries and unfair competition and disruption from the powerful, the rich and supported rivals.

The joint sectoral initiative of Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali in favour of cotton is a case in point of the plight of agriculture in Africa. President Amadou explained the crux of the matter by saying "our demand is simple: apply free trade rules not only to those products that are of interest to the rich and powerful, but also to those where poor countries have a proving competitive advantage".

Sudan readily supports this African Initiative on Cotton on its own merits and for its own reasons as well. Sudan grows long staple cotton in the largest cotton plantation scheme in the world

comprising one million acres. It also grows cotton: long, medium and short stable varieties in various schemes along the White Nile, the Blue Nile, Tocker Delta and rain-fed areas in the Nuba Hills.

Yet all that is to no avail. The one-time flourishing cotton plantations are in retreat and decline. We admit that a host of homegrown ills has had a hand in the disaster, yet unfair competition and international vagaries are the main culprits. Here in Cancún we have been urged by H.E. Mr Kofi Annan to say no, to trade policies that aggravate poverty. Let cotton farmers trade away from misery.

We take this opportunity to hail the accession of Cambodia and Nepal to the WTO. The first LDCs to accede in accordance with Article XII since 1995. In this context, we reiterate our special praise for the Decision of the 10 December 2002. In accordance with the forceful provisions of this historic decision, negotiations for accession of LDCs shall be "facilitated and accelerated through simplified and streamlined accession procedures".

We are hopeful that the accession of Cambodia and Nepal and the forthcoming accession of the Sudan shall lay the precedent of the guiding principle for LDCs' accession process. Namely the exercise of restraint in seeking concessions and commitments from acceding LDCs that are commensurate with their individual development, financial and trade needs, and that take into account the level of concessions and commitments undertaking by existing WTO LDCs Members.

I am obliged to emphasize that the implementation of 10 December guidelines would accord balance and harmony to the global trading system and would signal that the rich and powerful would take the poor on board.
