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Statement Circulated by H.E. Mr. Djitaingar Djibangar,
Minister for Industrial, Trade and Crafts Development

First of all, on behalf of the Chadian delegation I should like to convey to you, Mr. President, my warmest congratulations on your election to the chair of this Conference.

I also wish to express our deep gratitude to the Swiss Government and people for their warm welcome.

Over the last two years, our Organization has methodically and determinedly strived to implement the Singapore Ministerial Declaration aimed at further liberalization of trade.

In parallel with these efforts, it has approached development partners with the aim of fostering an integrated approach to help developing countries, especially the least-developed countries, to augment their trade potential. In this respect, the High-Level Meeting held in Geneva on 27 and 28 October 1997 was a practical manifestation of WTO's global integrated plan of action for the least-developed countries.

My country, Chad, wishes to take the opportunity once again to convey its sincere appreciation to the organizers of this meeting, who have taken positive steps not only with respect to training and utilizing human resources but also to building the institutional capacity of LLDCs.

The importance of this Second Conference is self-evident when one looks at the issues to be discussed.

Both developed and developing countries are aware of the advantages to be gained from a global trade environment that is free, transparent and stable. The majority of LLDCs, more particularly those in Africa, despite their very limited resources, are making strenuous efforts to meet their obligations under the various WTO Agreements. Substantial assistance from the WTO in this area is the only way of allowing them to undertake new commitments and obligations under the integrated programme.

With regard to implementation of the WTO's Multilateral Trade Agreements and their special provisions, developing countries in general and African LLDCs urge the WTO and the ITC to coordinate the activities of other development partners in order to elaborate programmes to build up the supply capacity of Member States so that they can respond to the opportunities offered by market access.

Many LLDCs face enormous difficulties in adapting their legislation to the WTO Agreements. They sincerely hope that these constraints will be taken into account when considering new obligations that might arise in connection with new issues.

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They welcome the initiative taken by the WTO to organize seminars on preparing notifications within the next few months. Chad hopes that technical assistance for training and advisory services will be reinforced.

In such diverse areas as trade practices and competition in African economies, regional integration in Africa, investment and competition, government procurement and the Multilateral Agreement on Investment, the ACP Group, with the assistance of the WTO Secretariat, has drawn up a number of proposals and recommendations that should be given careful consideration. These proposals and recommendations meet the need to ensure a balance among the interests at stake and the desire for equity because the prosperity of the developing world will lead to the prosperity of industrialized countries.

With regard to the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), like other African countries, Chad welcomes this initiative by the OECD and calls on the WTO Secretariat to study this matter further, working in harmony with the General Secretariat of OAU so as to ensure that African concerns receive due consideration.

I remain convinced that, at the end of this session, practical measures will be taken to enhance the prestige of our Organization and ensure that global trade is liberalized to the benefit of all.

I would be failing in my duty if I did not take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to the Director-General of the WTO for his constant accessibility over the past few years and also express my gratitude to the chairpersons of the working groups for the substantial preparatory work carried out.

I trust that our work will meet with full success and, once again, I thank you.
