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**SEPARATE CUSTOMS TERRITORY OF TAIWAN,
PENGHU, KINMEN AND MATSU**

Statement by Dr. Wang Chih-Kang
Minister for Economic Affairs

(Speaking as an Observer)

On behalf of the Separate Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu ("Chinese Taipei"), I wish to express my deepest appreciation to the Government of the United States and thank the State of Washington and the city of Seattle for hosting the Third WTO Ministerial Meeting.

This meeting is particularly significant as the outcome will set the pace for the global trade liberalization process for the next decade. The challenge for us is, on the one hand, to conclude the new round within a reasonable timeframe, while on the other, to maintain a balanced work programme that effectively addresses developing countries' concerns. We believe the results of the new round will add impetus to the current WTO trade liberalization agenda. The world will enjoy not only greater and freer trade flows, but also a stronger world economy that generates global prosperity and income growth.

We have been an observer to the GATT/WTO since 1992. During this time, although we did not participate in WTO discussions as a full member, we have closely followed the WTO multilateral rules and principles to initiate the necessary domestic reform. We have made major efforts to improve our trade regime and to work towards its compatibility with WTO rules. Our accession commitment is a further reflection of Chinese Taipei's determination to meet the requirements of the WTO. Given the opportunity, we also intend to share our experience, and contribute to developing WTO Members through means such as capacity building and technical assistance in their implementation of WTO obligations.

As trade ministers discuss the new agenda for the new round, we hope that WTO Members will continue with their support for Chinese Taipei's accession as early as possible. Needless to say, a more universal WTO would make future liberalization efforts more encompassing, and would particularly benefit policy coherence during the implementation process. This becomes even more crucial when we are launching the new round of trade negotiations at this stage.

As for Chinese Taipei's perspective on the new round, we are of the view that full implementation of the Uruguay Round commitments would serve as the basis for moving forward in constructing a liberal trading order. Chinese Taipei also fully recognizes the importance of continuing negotiations on reduction of tariff and non-tariff trade barriers to further the liberalization objectives. On the new issues, we believe it is important to factor environmental considerations into the development of the WTO trade policy agenda, to fully reflect the spirits of sustainable development established in the Marrakesh Agreement. Efforts in this direction could include ensuring policy coherence between WTO measures and multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). With the fast

changing global trading environment, it becomes increasingly important to turn to "behind-the-border" measures, such as competition and investment policies. However, these issues are complex, and the divergence in economic structures and levels of economic development should be accounted for in exploring means to address the relevant concerns.

Finally, I wish to thank all concerned for providing us with this precious opportunity to convey our messages to the WTO Members. And we look forward to working alongside our WTO colleagues as a full Member during the new round of trade negotiations.
