

# WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

WT/MIN(03)/ST/11  
10 September 2003

(03-4746)

---

MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE  
Fifth Session  
Cancún, 10 - 14 September 2003

Original: English

## UNITED KINGDOM

Statement by Mr Mike O'Brien  
Minister for Trade, Investment and Foreign Affairs

We face a challenge in the coming days. It will require cooperation, political vision and leadership.

Success in the DDA could help 300 million people in developing countries to lift themselves out of poverty.

Getting 146 countries to agree will not be easy.

Up to now we have seen Member nations define and stick to their negotiating positions. That is only to be expected.

After all, we come from countries around the world with different national interests and objectives.

But in the days to come we need the courage and vision to negotiate a reconciliation of interests - an agreement to deliver for the poor - to master the challenge of globalization and expand the opportunities for international trade.

Some say it is better for the Round to fail unless they get all they demand.

That is an abdication of responsibility.

The people of the world are looking for progress, not intransigence.

We gain or lose together at this Conference.

At the heart of the Doha Round must be a shared commitment to making the multilateral trading system work for developing countries.

Globalization is a fact of life for the people of the world.

The question is whether globalization can be governed by rules in a way which benefits all the people of the world.

This Conference gives us the chance to put impetus back into the Doha Round by renewing our commitment to the Development Agenda.

The important agreement reached on TRIPS and public health some days ago demonstrates that, with the right political will, difficult decisions can be taken by political leaders.

We in the developed countries have a particular responsibility.

Though the loudest advocates of freer trade, we are often the largest subsidizers. This penalizes our tax payers and consumers and hurts poorer countries alike. It must change.

Developed countries are better able than poorer countries to smooth over the pain that adjustment can bring.

We must be ambitious to reach agreement. Agreement on a framework for significant reductions in agricultural subsidies and tariffs is vital to the growth of developing countries.

Europe has already contributed to this with its major reform of the CAP.

It also means an ambitious framework for reductions in trade barriers to non-agricultural goods, especially in sectors important to developing countries.

It means reaching agreement on an interim package on Special and Differential Treatment. And it means agreeing a way forward on the Singapore Issues.

Achieving agreement on all these issues between 146 Members will be tough. But it is vital if we are to conclude the Round by 1 January 2005 and seize the opportunities it offers.

A properly functioning, multilateral trading system, based on consensus and enforceable rules, provides all countries, large and small, with the potential to pursue those opportunities and increase their prosperity.

If we cannot find the political will to reach agreement, we undermine the very institution - the WTO - that gives people the ability to address the challenges of globalization. An Organization which - as the very welcome accession ceremonies for Nepal and Cambodia this evening demonstrate - is still much in demand.

If we succeed in reaching agreement here in Cancún we will strengthen the multilateral system of rules from which we all gain. We will strengthen the foundations of our security. And help to drive prosperity and opportunity around the globe and above all in the developing world. The poor of the world have waited too long for governments to agree to create the economic opportunities, the jobs, and the hope they need. We must not fail them.

---