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## RWANDA

Statement by H.E. Dr Alexandre Lyambabaje  
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On behalf of the people and Government of Rwanda, I should like to thank the people and Government of Mexico for the warm welcome and hospitality they have shown us since our arrival in Cancún.

This WTO Conference takes place at a time when social inequalities caused by poverty are an increasing source of conflicts and humanitarian disasters. Mindful of that fact, the WTO Members decided at Doha that the multilateral trading system was to be placed in the service of development. It was a message received with great relief in many capitals, especially in Africa, and raised the hopes of countless people around the world, particularly among the poorest.

My country, Rwanda, wishes to congratulate all WTO Members, and the industrialized countries in particular, that agreed to put financial interests to one side and thus facilitate access to the essential medicines most needed by the populations of the developing countries. Once again, people have shown their capacity for understanding, flexibility, solidarity, and humanity.

Significant though this achievement may be, it should not distract us from the other challenges to be met, if possible, here in Cancún. There is no point in healing the sick, if they are to die of starvation next day. Health and education are essential, and economic development is vital. Thus, a missed opportunity in the negotiations on agriculture is a matter of the gravest concern for many delegations in attendance here.

Farmers in developed countries are still demanding subsidies and protection and their Governments, at least until now, have been meeting those demands. At the same time, coffee producers in Rwanda and cotton growers in Mali are left to fend for themselves against market forces, without any protection at all. It might well be asked whether those who are the root cause of this situation in Africa genuinely believed in the wisdom of their policies, or whether they simply made guinea-pigs of the world's poorest inhabitants in a bid to test the impact of trade liberalization on the agricultural sector. Whatever the answer, the result in Africa has been disastrous, bringing unbearable poverty to rural areas, and growing despair.

My country, Rwanda, has risen from the flames and achieved complete peace and security only nine years after the genocide in 1994. A democratically-elected President of the Republic was sworn in yesterday, and a parliament elected by universal suffrage is to start sitting in October 2003. Thus, good governance and democracy have become the foundations for running our country, acting as the pillars for sustainable economic development projects and economic development based on Rwanda's integration in the multilateral trading system.

However, if the international community fails to act to set up a fairer, more equitable economic partnership, guaranteeing economic growth and job creation for our peoples, all of our efforts will have been in vain. My delegation reiterates its call for a strong commitment by developed countries to eliminate all export subsidies and remove all barriers to trade. We also urge developing countries to make the necessary sacrifices to promote and develop South-South trade.

Rwanda is absolutely convinced of the importance of trade in services for the economic development of our respective countries. Nevertheless, only those able to move freely and quickly from place to place will be able to take full advantage of this trade. At a time when the rich are increasingly frightened of their poorer neighbours, and in a world where some people travel without a visa and others are barred entry, how can we expect the latter to benefit from trade in services too? Marginally yes, but in full, no! For this reason, my delegation firmly believes that free movement of persons has to be guaranteed in the context of the negotiations on trade in services, with a view to eliminating all forms of arbitrary discrimination.

Allow me to conclude by expressing the hope that the Conference will be successful, success that features a renewed and genuine commitment to help improve the quality of life of the people of this planet, and to help lay the foundations for a better future for African farmers.

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