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EL SALVADOR

Statement by H.E. Mr. Eduardo Ayala Grimaldi, Vice-Minister of Economy

On the threshold of a new century, I think it is appropriate that we should recognize, firstly, the enormous efforts made by the developing countries towards the liberalization of trade, and secondly, the benefits which the multilateral trading system has provided us, by establishing clear rules to regulate trade, benefits which are indeed reflected in the significant growth of trade over the past years. However, we are concerned at the fact that the share in trade of the least developed countries and the small developing countries is not reflected in any significant way in this growth.

We must not forget that the efforts that the developing countries have had to make in response to the demands of liberalization have not always been without sacrifice. We think that the objectives of liberalization should be tailored to the requirements of the future, but without forgetting the experience acquired over these past years.

According to world economic indices, this century is supposed to end with a slowing world economy that is divided and fraught with instability. We are confronted with serious problems following the financial crisis that negatively influenced growth in the developing countries, in particular in Latin America, generating increased poverty and unemployment which have had an impact on the well-being of our peoples. Consequently, in our view, we are faced with the difficult task of halting and reversing the fragmentation currently affecting the world economy in order to make way for a century of peace and well-being for all peoples.

We are convinced that in launching a new round of negotiations we must bear in mind the need to achieve a balance of opportunities which would enable the developing countries to help their productive sectors to be competitive and to deal successfully with market liberalization. This requires special conditions for the developing countries, in particular the small economies, to enable them to take on new commitments. El Salvador, like other small developing economies, has made an enormous effort to bring its trade policies into conformity with WTO regulations. However, its efforts to achieve a greater share in international trade have not met with sufficient success owing, *inter alia*, to the barriers and limitations which continue to prevail in certain export markets.

As regards the agricultural sector, we must appeal to the developed countries to agree on further liberalization of agriculture aimed at putting an end to practices which distort and upset the balance of world trade in agricultural products.

We firmly believe that by fully applying everything that we agree upon in this conference, in particular as regards the solutions to the problems of implementation of the agreements and the recognition of the needs of the small developing economies, we can obtain greater and improved benefits and ensure that our countries are fully integrated into the multilateral system.

I would urge the Ministers present here today to agree to draw up a working programme on the small developing economies which would take account of their very particular concerns and needs in these new negotiations, and to establish a cooperation plan which would meet their specific needs and help them to overcome the difficulties facing them.

El Salvador is committed to maintaining the impetus of multilateral liberalization. This is why we support the launching of the new round of negotiations at this conference, and we trust that the declaration we adopt will include effective measures to ensure the proper implementation of special and differential treatment for the developing countries, in particular the small economies, thus ensuring market access for the export products of our countries.

For El Salvador, the rights of workers are an extremely important aspect which we are dealing with very seriously in the competent international body, the ILO; and in that body, we hope that labour laws will receive the attention they deserve.

Finally, El Salvador is convinced that this effort, which is certainly being made by all of the developing countries, should receive clear support from the developed countries in the form of new and increased trade opportunities which would enable our countries to achieve greater market access for the products we produce most efficiently and competitively, thus helping to boost economic development.
