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MOZAMBIQUE

Statement by H. E. Mr. Oldemiro J.M. Baloi Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism

Allow me, first of all, to congratulate you, on behalf of the Government and people of Mozambique and indeed on my own behalf, upon your election to preside over our deliberations in this Third WTO Ministerial Conference. We stand ready to fully cooperate with you.

Let me join previous speakers in thanking the Government and people of the United States of America for their warm hospitality.

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the Honourable Minister of Tanzania, on behalf of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC).

We live in a world characterized by more uncertainty and disquiet, as the globalization and liberalization of the world economy takes root. The challenges ahead of us lie, to a large extent, on how to devise appropriate mechanisms to achieve a more balanced sharing of the benefits of globalization.

My delegation concurs with the frustrations expressed by other speakers, particularly from developing countries and the LDCs among them, at the realization that most of our expectations after the end of the Cold War have not materialized. The spiral of impoverishment, marginalization and exclusion of our countries appears to have gained new strengths.

It is my delegation's conviction that more trade is always better than less trade. I, therefore, believe that the WTO is the most appropriate forum to address all Members' trade concerns. Its working methods lead to a system in which more trade is complemented by rules and disciplines that are binding to the whole membership. As the 21st century dawns, we need a WTO that works towards assuring not only the participation of developing countries and the LDCs among them, into the multilateral trading system, but that they derive concrete and tangible benefits from it, thus narrowing the gap between rich and poor.

Let me now touch on some specific issues of particular interest and concern to my delegation. We attach particular importance towards achieving, among other outcomes, the following objectives:

- Improved market access for products originating in developing countries, through further lowering of trade barriers in areas of particular interest to these countries, such as agricultural products, textiles and clothing, among others.
- Extension of bound, duty-free and quota-free market access for all products originating in the LDCs. It is a well-know fact that these countries' share of the international market is simply marginal (it declined from 0.8 per cent in 1980 to 0.5 per cent of world trade today, according to an UNCTAD report on LDCs).

Duty-free and quota-free access for their products would represent a meaningful political commitment to helping them address some of the most daunting challenges of our time, such as the extreme poverty.

- Adoption and implementation of capacity building strategies and programmes aimed at addressing the inextricable link between increased market access and improved supply capacity. The elimination of trade barriers needs to be complemented by appropriate measures to help the LDCs overcome their infrastructure and institutional weaknesses, including investment in areas such as health care, education and other social concerns. We need a WTO that actively engages in a real partnership with the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions and other international organizations in the search for and adoption of integrated and effective technical assistance strategies, tailored to developing countries' needs, including appropriate funding mechanisms.
- Adoption of a new global partnership that involves advancing sustainable development strategies that put people at the centre stage of development, by the provision of basic human development levels for all peoples. A partnership that involves a constructive dialogue between governments, the private sector, the NGOs, the civil society at large, and ultimately, a partnership that entails a strong support to developing countries and the LDCs in their efforts to integrate themselves into the world economy, by focusing on the identification of targets and objectives such as poverty eradication, improved access to markets, reduction in disparities between countries, improved access to health, education and food security. As an LDC, Mozambique believes in the merits of a new round of trade negotiations that encompasses a development dimension.
- Greater understanding of the need to embrace more creative solutions to debt relief. While we appreciate the HIPC initiative, we would like to emphasize the importance of improving its implementation mechanisms. In this regard, I would also like to praise the efforts currently being undertaken by the G-7 and the Bretton Woods institutions, and urge developed countries to seize this momentum and embark on efforts aimed at matching debt relief with improved market access initiatives. This is crucial for the effective mainstreaming of the LDCs into the multilateral trading system.
- Concurrence of the entire WTO membership to the need to renew the waiver granted to ACP-EU countries in order to allow the continuation of existing trading arrangements until the end of the preparatory period and beyond, if necessary. This will help address specific trade concerns and needs of 71 developing countries, comprising 48 LDCs and 29 WTO Members. It is my delegation's belief that the reasons underlying the extension of this waiver still prevail and deserve positive consideration by WTO Members.

Before I conclude, let me express my delegation's view, that among the various issues before us, implementation issues should be given primacy over new ones.

Trade cannot be seen as an end in itself, nor can it be seen as the only answer to the challenges facing today's world. We need investment, infrastructure, education, training and skills to take advantage of the opportunities offered by globalization and liberalization. We therefore, favour an approach that includes embracing new and creative cooperation paradigms, in order to turn trade relations into an important tool in our endeavours to provide better living standards to our peoples.
