

# WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

WT/MIN(03)/ST/135  
13 September 2003

(03-4912)

MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE  
Fifth Session  
Cancún, 10 - 14 September 2003

Original: English

## EGYPT

Statement by H.E. Dr Youssef Boutros-Ghali  
Minister of Foreign Trade

I would like to express my Government's gratitude for the warm reception and excellent organization provided by the Mexican Government for this great Conference.

First, allow me to comment on a number of recent developments in the ambit of the WTO. Egypt welcomes the recent Decision by the General Council that facilitates the access to basic and vital pharmaceuticals to many Member countries in need. I know that many Members worked very hard at convincing their constituencies of this just and humanitarian cause. Their efforts should be recognized, and they deserve our thanks.

We have reached an important turning point in the life of our multilateral trading system. All the good intentions and promises of the Doha Declaration have come back to us, and it is time that we deliver. Until a few weeks ago, the Doha Development Agenda was "development" only in name. But we delivered, and the TRIPS and Public Health issue was resolved. Yet much more lies ahead. Now we have to deliver again. We have to commit to a new order that truly addresses the needs of developing countries. It is time that agriculture is brought into the mainstream of our rules-based system. It is time that **agriculture** is opened up, so that the great potential that is within the reach of developing countries can be achieved.

Egypt looks forward to the day when it will grow from a net food importer into a net food exporter. That day will come when trade in agricultural products is liberalized, and subjected to the disciplines that cover other goods.

We welcome the statement of the European Communities, and hope that in the coming few days we can work together to bring forth a solution we can all live with and grow by.

On **non-agricultural market access**, Egypt believes that we should continue liberalization. But we must remain aware that many developing countries still need protection and support for industries that have not yet taken hold in their economies. These concerns have to be accommodated.

**Singapore Issues** are still not clear enough to be addressed now. Many countries still do not see the need or the use for a multilateral agreement on investment or competition, while many can see the benefit of agreements on transparency in government procurement and trade facilitation. These agreements have to be drafted so as to take into account the capacities, constraints and needs of developing countries.

But the "development" dimension of the Doha Agenda does not only lie in agriculture or NAMA. It is also in the **development issues**: Implementation, Special & Differential Treatment, Rules; Capacity-Building and others; issues that do not have the same media appeal, but which are - nonetheless - essential to the integration of developing countries into the multilateral trading system.

We have many challenges ahead in the coming days and months. We must rise up to them. Many good men and women are working in this Conference Centre; let us hope that they will have

the vision and the commitment to bring about an agreement that can open the door to a new era of prosperity for the world economy; an era where differences between rich and poor nations narrow, and where the prosperity of developed countries is shared with the nations of the Third World in a common ambition for the welfare of humanity.

The multilateral trading system has grown considerably. Its problems and challenges need constant care.

The organizations that deal with the world's development, monetary and financial problems, viz the IMF and World Bank, meet once a year. Egypt would like to formally submit that the WTO Ministerial Meeting also be convened once a year.

Finally, I would like to welcome Cambodia and Nepal to this great community of nations dedicated to multilateral trade. I am sure their Membership in our Organization will bring a better life for their peoples.

---