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VIET NAM

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(Speaking as an Observer)

On behalf of the Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, I would like to join other speakers in congratulating the Organizing Committee and the people of Mexico for the excellent arrangements for the Fifth WTO Ministerial Conference in Cancún. This most wonderful city should offer the ideal surroundings for us to further enhance the multilateral trading system as well as to realize what we have not been able to achieve.

No one can deny that the establishment of the WTO has brought about positive results for global trading activities, making significant contribution to the economic development of many countries and territories in the world. One success of this Organization is clearly evidenced by the increasing number of its Members and active accession negotiation by observers for early WTO memberships. All these show that it is completely reasonable and rational to keep the momentum so that the WTO can move forward.

The reality, however, also shows that poorer countries have not been able to realize and receive the full benefits from WTO rules. These countries, whose economies meet many difficulties, still have to implement huge amount of obligations set by this Organization. The recent developments in WTO also show worrisome signs, that is in parallel with trade liberalization, some countries have misused WTO Agreements to erect barriers against products from other countries, especially from developing countries that, unfortunately, include products that are essential to the development process of developing countries.

Being a country which has been making great efforts to open to the outside world and actively integrating into regional and global economy, Viet Nam acknowledges and highly appreciates the opportunities arising from globalization. Viet Nam believes that our international economic integration process together with policy and domestic institutional reforms will help bringing domestic resources into full play, making contribution to reaching development and poverty reduction objectives.

As a WTO's observer, Viet Nam is sparing no effort to implement necessary measures to advance our accession negotiations with a view to gaining early WTO membership. Taking this opportunity, on behalf of the Government of Viet Nam, I would also like to express our sincere thanks to the Members of the Working Party on Viet Nam's accession to the WTO and the WTO Secretariat for the valuable support given to Viet Nam in our accession process. In this regard, we would be grateful for greater attention and support from WTO Members on Viet Nam's accession negotiations by showing your practical view on Viet Nam's development level and, especially, our determination to integrate into the world economy. Bearing this in mind, negotiation requests should be made on a

reasonable basis, neither go beyond WTO standards nor the capacity of an economy at a low level of development and in transition like Viet Nam.

I myself highly appreciate the progress made by the WTO in admitting new Members and have pleasure to join other Ministers in expressing our heartfelt congratulations to the completion of accession procedures by the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Kingdom of Nepal. This is a positive sign showing that WTO is edging towards the objective of being a global organization and having in-depth impact on global economic life. Viet Nam calls on WTO Members to continue to show flexibility in other accession negotiations as they have shown in these two accessions.

Once again, let me reaffirm our belief in the role of WTO for development of countries and territories in the world and I wish the Fifth WTO Ministerial Conference a great success, matching the Members' aspirations in making this a cornerstone, making the Doha Round a truly significant development round.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.
