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CHAD

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Let me begin by expressing, on behalf of the Chadian delegation which I head and on my own behalf, my heartfelt thanks to the Government and people of Qatar for their warm and brotherly welcome and for the hospitality we have enjoyed ever since we arrived in this beautiful country.

I would also like to thank the Secretariat of the World Trade Organisation for the excellent organization of this Conference.

Finally, our thanks go to the Director General of the WTO, Mike Moore, and to his colleagues, whose competence and constant availability have contributed to reinforcing the credibility of the World Trade Organization over the past two years. We also commend them for their considerable efforts in putting together a draft Ministerial Declaration which constitutes a basis for negotiation.

As we have stressed on other occasions, Chad is committed to the objectives pursued by the Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization. This commitment is reflected in the trade liberalization measures that we have taken in the area of both goods and services.

With respect to trade in services in particular, we have gone beyond the commitments assumed when we joined the WTO by further liberalizing telecommunications and banking services.

Access to the Chadian market has thus greatly improved. The fact is, however, that the advantages that LDCs such as Chad expect from the multilateral trading system have not materialized and my country, like most other countries in its category, remains poorly placed within the system.

Consequently, it is urgent that the Fourth WTO Ministerial Conference should place the issue of the integration of developing countries in general and the least-developed countries in particular at the centre of its work.

How do we turn the multilateral trading system into an instrument capable of promoting economic development? It seems to us that the facilitation of LDC integration in the world economy with a view to eliminating endemic poverty should serve as a backdrop for discussions in this important Conference.

In our view, the greatest challenge facing us is still duty-free access to the markets of developed country Members for products from the developing and least developed countries.

On the subject of essential medicines, we are dealing with a matter of life or death. This Conference must send a clear message to the world that nothing in the TRIPS Agreement can prevent

Members from taking measures to protect public health. In other words, the Agreement must be interpreted and implemented in such a way as to support the right of WTO Members to protect public health and to ensure that everyone has access to medicines.

We should then improve the production capacity of the LDCs by facilitating the transfer of technology, which should be made binding.

To enhance the WTO's capacity to integrate the LDCs in the global economy, we call upon this Conference to suggest measures to make the provisions relating to special and differential treatment operational through a Decision that would render them legally binding.

Moreover, we reaffirm our wish to ensure that existing trade preferences are maintained, while at the same time stressing that any new preference granted would not undermine the current terms and conditions of preferential access.

Because they lack both the technical and financial means, the LDCs are finding it more and more difficult to honour their WTO commitments. We have therefore decided to urge the developed country Members of the WTO to implement their obligations and commitments in the area of capacity building in the developing countries and the least developed countries.

Over the past few years, we have been able to observe a certain incoherence between the activities of the Bretton Woods Institutions and the WTO that has aggravated the already enormous problems facing the LDCs, *inter alia*, in honouring their WTO commitments; indeed, the implementation of WTO commitments has to take place alongside the implementation, every bit as important, of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP).

We would therefore like to stress the importance of strengthening the coherence of the present and future activities of those institutions.

At the same time, we are in favour of the full implementation of the Declaration on the Contribution of the WTO to Achieving Greater Coherence in Global Economic Policy Making.

Most of the Uruguay Round Agreements provided for various forms of assistance by the developed countries to the LDCs in implementing the results of the Round. However, much to our regret, the assistance has rarely been forthcoming. We continue to believe that without that assistance, the LDCs cannot participate effectively in the multilateral trading system and hence in the global economy.

Added to this lack of assistance is the foreign debt burden of the LDCs. Indeed, the question of the LDCs participating in the global economy and the multilateral trading system cannot be properly tackled unless a definitive solution is found to the overwhelming burden of foreign debt carried by the LDCs, which renders any development effort hopeless.

Consequently, we must analyze with the utmost urgency the relationship between trade, debt and development, with a view to reducing the debt substantially if not simply eliminating it completely.

I do not wish to end my statement without addressing the chapter devoted to the new issues and to the difficulties facing several countries upon their accession to the WTO.

While we recognize their importance, we do not feel that this is the right moment to negotiate any of these issues, be it trade and competition policy, trade and the environment, trade and investment, or electronic commerce, whose possible inclusion in our agenda is mentioned more and

more frequently, since the objectives that we set when the WTO was created have not resulted in the benefits expected, *inter alia*, by the LDCs.

As regards accession of countries to the WTO, Chad can only observe with a certain amount of bitterness that any country wishing to accede to the WTO is faced with long and cumbersome procedures and a lack of clear and objective rules. For the LDCs, WTO Members should facilitate the accession process by providing conditions that take account of their level of development, of the Uruguay Round Decision on Measures in Favour of the Least Developed Countries and of the basic principles of special and differential treatment, and help them by providing financial, technical and other assistance, including institutional assistance and capacity building.

On the occasion of its accession to the WTO at this Conference, I congratulated our friends and brothers of Chinese Taipei on behalf of the President and Head of State, the Government and the People of Chad. Indeed, our country has always expressed the wish that Chinese Taipei should accede to the WTO, a step which will undoubtedly give the Organization a new impetus.

We firmly believe and hope that, "Inchallah", at the issue of this Fourth Ministerial Conference, concrete measures will be foreseen to implement whatever resolutions are put forward.
