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DUTY FREE AND QUOTA FREE MARKET ACCESS FOR LDCs

Proposal of Pakistan and Sri Lanka

The following communication, dated 17 December 2005, is being circulated at the request of the delegations of Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Decision on Measures in Favour of Least-Developed Countries

The Ministerial Conference agrees that Developed Country Members shall, and Developing Country Members declaring themselves in a position to do so should:

- (a) Provide duty-free and quota-free market access [on a lasting basis]; for all products originating from all LDCs in a manner that ensures stability, security, and predictability. *However, if such access adversely affects market access for other developing countries in products that constitute more than [a%] of their total annual exports in value terms, then the same concession shall also be extended to such products of those developing countries.*

Members facing difficulties at this time to provide market access as set out above shall provide duty-free market access for at least [y%] of products originating from LDCs, defined at the tariff line level, by year [x] above. In addition, these Members shall take steps to progressively achieve compliance with the obligations set out above.

Developing country Members shall be permitted to phase in their commitments and shall enjoy flexibility in coverage.

- (b) Notwithstanding any measure necessary to prevent circumvention, Members shall ensure that rules of origin are transparent and simple, so as to improve the utilisation of preference schemes.

Members shall notify the implementation of the schemes adopted under this decision every year to the Committee on Trade and Development. The Committee on Trade and Development shall annually review the steps taken to provide duty-free and quota-free market access to the LDCs and report to the General Council for appropriate action.

The Ministerial Conference urges all donors and relevant international institutions to increase financial and technical support aimed at the diversification of LDC economies, while providing additional financial and technical assistance through appropriate delivery mechanism to meet their implementation obligations, including fulfilling SPS and TBT requirements, and to assist them in managing their adjustment process.
