

PRESS RELEASE

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STANDARDS AND TRADE DEVELOPMENT FACILITY

The United Kingdom donates 1.9 million Swiss Francs for the Standards and Trade Development Facility

On 4 February 2005, the United Kingdom Government signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the WTO over a contribution of £850,000 (approximately CHF 1.9 million) to the Standards and Trade Development Facility, a programme which assists developing countries in improving their expertise and capacity to analyse and implement international sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standards.

"I thank the United Kingdom for its generous contribution which will enable us to respond to developing country demands for assistance in the implementation of sanitary and phytosanitary standards," said WTO Director-General Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi. "Keeping pace with new SPS standards in export markets is a real challenge for developing countries. Programmes like the Standards and Trade Development Facility, by informing developing country governments of new developments in SPS standards and assisting them in their implementation, have a direct impact on these countries' capacity to export."

The Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) is a joint initiative between the World Trade Organization, the World Health Organization, the World Bank, the World Organization for Animal Health, and the Food and Agriculture Organization. It was established with initial funding from the World Bank Development Grant Facility and the WTO's Doha Development Agenda Global Trust Fund.

To date, four WTO Members have given funds to the STDF: France, the Netherlands, Denmark and the UK. The WTO Secretariat administers the STDF trust fund which finances the programme.

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