

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

WT/MIN(09)/ST/116
2 December 2009

(09-6416)

MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
Seventh Session
Geneva, 30 November - 2 December 2009

Original: French

SENEGAL

Statement by HE Mr Amadou Niang
Minister of Trade

This Session gives us the opportunity to express our views on the following important matters:

- WTO activities, including the Doha Work Programme; and
- the WTO's contribution to recovery, growth and development.

Since the Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong, the implementation of the Doha Agenda has not progressed to the extent expected.

Sacrifices must therefore be made to rectify this situation, which, if left unchecked, could weaken the multilateral trading system even further.

In this context, special attention must be given immediately to developing and least developed countries, which face constraints in terms of access to developed country markets.

Africa currently has the greatest number of LDCs and remains the most marginalized continent in the multilateral trading system. Consequently, it is on Africa that the continuing international trade distortions are taking the heaviest toll.

In this respect, the implementation of the Doha Work Programme could contribute to raising living standards in Africa and help millions of Africans to escape poverty.

Senegal, like other LDCs, does not yet benefit fully from its involvement in the multilateral trading system. Our main concerns relate to the following matters:

- Fairness in the determination of tariffs and other factors which structure Member countries' trade;
- rapid implementation of the special safeguard mechanism;
- the possibility of adopting support measures to combat poverty, minimize the impact of price volatility and increase productivity;
- implementation of duty-free and quota-free access to the markets of developed countries and those of developing countries able to provide such access, on a sustainable basis;

- simplification and harmonization of rules of origin;
- the introduction of mechanisms aimed at dealing with specific phenomena that could nullify the benefits of special and differential treatment;
- the cotton issue, the treatment of which is neither expeditious, ambitious nor specific, despite the commitments made since July 2004;
- effective implementation of the provisions of the SPS and TBT Agreements relating to technical assistance for capacity building in the developing countries and the LDCs;
- appropriate handling of the threat posed by preference erosion;
- implementation of the ministerial decisions on services which invite the developed countries to open up those sectors and modes of supply that offer benefits to the LDCs;
- implementation of the amendment of 6 December 2005 to Article 31 of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights.

With regard to the current economic crisis, it should be recalled that African trade ministers recently expressed their concerns in Cairo regarding the impact of the crisis on trade and development in Africa.

In general, the crisis will affect African countries in various ways and at different points in time.

The economic slowdown in rich countries, which brings with it a contraction in demand, redundancies, and a tightening of migration policy, may well lead to a reduction not only in remittances from migrant workers, but in foreign direct investment and Official Development Assistance.

In the light of this situation, how could the multilateral trading system help to mitigate the negative effects of the crisis?

It should be emphasized that for developing countries and LDCs, trade can be vital for furthering their integration into the world economy and improving their ability to cope with the crisis. To this end, it is necessary to:

- Make Aid for Trade operational at multilateral level so as to help mobilize adequate resources for the most organized sectors, i.e. those with significant supply potential and the competitive edge;
- develop the Enhanced Integrated Framework so as to provide LDCs with adequate and appropriate financing;
- set up regional export financing mechanisms;
- build the capacity of the human resources involved in trade negotiations on WTO-related issues.

Senegal emphasizes the urgency of concluding the Round of negotiations so as to ensure that the development commitments set forth in the Doha Agenda are met.

The international community is called upon to act, since the credibility of the multilateral trading system is at stake.
