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HAITI

Statement by H.E. Mr. Gérald Germain, Minister of Trade and Industry

The delegation of Haiti is pleased to be able to work under your wise leadership to correct the imbalances and inequities of globalization and to step up the process of effective integration of the least developed countries into the multilateral trading system. Haiti supports the new action plan adopted at Sun City in June 1999, the position of the Group of 77 expressed at Marrakesh in September 1999 and the declaration of the second ACP summit in Santo Domingo in November 1999. We attach great importance to the following issues:

- Implementation of existing agreements and decisions;
- the new round of negotiations;
- the new subjects of negotiation;
- action in favour of the LDCs and technical cooperation.

Haiti believes that priority should be given to the implementation of the existing decisions and agreements over any possible new round of negotiations. Indeed, we must identify the numerous shortcomings in implementation and correct them if we wish to avoid recourse to protectionist measures and promote growth, full employment, development and stability for the 135 Members in general and the LDCs in particular. We must deal urgently with the problems of implementation, in particular in the fields of anti-dumping, the Agreement on Subsidies, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, technical barriers to trade, textiles and clothing, trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights and special and differential treatment.

Haiti questions the holding of a new round of negotiations intended to go beyond the subjects included in the incorporated programme, i.e. agriculture, services and the TRIPS Agreements. We think that it is premature to plan on negotiations aimed at reaching a multilateral agreement in areas such as investment, labour standards, environment and competition policy within the framework of the WTO. These areas, although of interest to the WTO, should continue to be dealt with by the specialized agencies of the United Nations system. However, we encourage the different working groups set up to study the links between trade and these different areas to pursue their work.

With a view to the complete and effective integration of the LDCs in the multilateral trading system, Haiti would like the WTO to truly commit itself to stepping up the implementation of the integrated framework by providing the necessary technical assistance and financial resources in cooperation with the leading multilateral bodies, the bilateral donors and the governments concerned, the aim being to strengthen the supply capacity of the LDCs. To that end, the WTO's technical cooperation activities should be financed from the regular budget so that all Members, including the LDCs, contribute.

Haiti encourages the WTO to take the necessary steps to ensure that products from all of the least developed Member countries are given duty free and quota free market access. We call for a substantial reduction, or even elimination, of tariff and non-tariff barriers affecting market access for the LDCs.

We cannot hide our disappointment at the failure by certain of our partners to follow up the integrated framework seriously. Indeed, despite the efforts made by both the public and private sectors alike to prepare and conduct the sectoral round table on trade in conformity with the recommendations of the high-level meeting of October 1997, despite the spirit of coordination that we contributed to creating among the six agencies involved in Haiti, and despite of the partnership structure established between the public and private sectors on the occasion of the sectoral round table on trade held in Port-au-Prince last November, very few of our partners have kept their promises to finance the projects submitted. Finally, Haiti would like to draw the attention of its partners to the fact that this round table experience revealed that coherence, however important, is worthless if it is not followed by action. Consequently, we encourage the WTO to take steps to establish an operational institutional mechanism which would ensure coherence between it and the institutions, in particular the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, whose interventions affect the development process of the developing countries in general and the LDCs in particular.
