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Committee on Agriculture Special Session
Sub-Committee on Cotton

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WTO NEGOTIATIONS ON AGRICULTURE

Communication from the Co-Sponsors of the Sectoral Initiative in Favour of Cotton¹

The following communication, dated 26 November 2018, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of Benin on behalf of the co-sponsors of the Sectoral Initiative in Favour of Cotton.

N'DJAMENA MINISTERIAL DECLARATION ON COTTON

We, the Trade Ministers of the four co-sponsors of the Sectoral Initiative in Favour of Cotton (C4) at the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Geneva, on the occasion of the 6th Regular C4 Coordination Meeting in N'Djamena (Chad) on 15 and 16 November 2018;

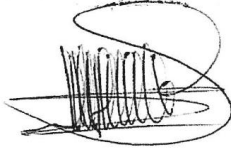
1. **Deeply** concerned by the lack of substantial outcomes in the multilateral trade negotiations on domestic support for cotton, despite the mandate issued in December 2005 in Hong Kong;
2. **Having reviewed** all the outcomes of the 11th Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization, held in Buenos Aires (Argentina) from 10 to 13 December 2017;
3. **Stressing** that the issue of cotton is of vital interest for the economies and populations of cotton producing and exporting African countries and, in particular, least developed countries (LDCs);
4. **Having examined** the development of the negotiations and assessed the negative impact, on economies and social conditions, of domestic support that creates distortion, of export subsidies, and of any other form of cotton subsidy with equivalent effects granted by certain WTO Members;
5. **Stressing** that this support and these subsidies continue to disrupt world cotton prices and that one of the main consequences of this disruption is the significant loss of income suffered by millions of people in cotton producing and exporting African countries and LDCs;
6. Also **stressing** the crucial role of the cotton sector in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), notably as regards the fight against poverty and the contribution to food security in cotton producing and exporting African countries and LDCs;
7. **Recalling** that Trade Ministers gave a clear and specific mandate for addressing the cotton issue at the WTO in the Ministerial Decisions on Cotton adopted on 1 August 2004 in Geneva and on 22 December 2005 in Hong Kong, calling for cotton to be addressed "ambitiously, expeditiously and specifically";
8. **Recalling** our N'Djamena appeal of 16 November 2005, the subsequent Ouagadougou Declarations of 20 June 2006 and 6 September 2007, the Bamako Declaration of 27 October 2016, and the Cotonou Declaration of 21 April 2017;

¹ Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali and Chad.

9. **Recalling** Decision WT/MIN(15)/W/48, dated 19 December 2015, of the 10th WTO Ministerial Conference held in Nairobi (Kenya) from 15 to 19 December 2015, and the need to achieve substantive and measurable outcomes for cotton;
10. **Recalling** the conclusions and observations formulated at the close of the various sessions of the WTO Director-General's Consultative Framework Mechanism on Cotton, held in Geneva, and following the resumption of the post-Nairobi multilateral trade negotiations on cotton;
11. Urgently **call upon** all WTO Members granting domestic support that distorts the international cotton market to strive for further progress in the work on cotton and to notify, on a regular basis and for the purpose of greater transparency, up-to-date information on the domestic support granted to their producers, with a view to meeting the objectives set for this vital issue as quickly as possible;
12. **Emphasize** the need to explore all possible solutions that would adequately respond to and take into consideration the vital and trade-related concerns of several million producers regarding domestic support for cotton;
13. **Consider**, therefore, that the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference should be the deadline for carrying out the mandate on cotton given by the Trade Ministers 15 years ago, a mandate which has yet to be addressed in any adequate and meaningful way;
14. **Once again express** our confidence in our negotiators in Geneva and, at the same time, give them a fresh mandate to pursue the negotiations on cotton;
15. **Remain** committed to working towards a conclusion to the Doha Round of negotiations, taking account of the concerns of developing countries and, more particularly, those of the LDCs, which include several African countries;
16. **Express** our readiness to continue the reforms under way in the cotton sector in our countries;
17. **Reaffirm** our support for a multilateral trading system based on WTO rules;
18. **Thank** the South-South, North-South, bilateral, regional and multilateral development partners for their support for capacity-building activities with respect to the production, processing and exportation of cotton and cotton by-products in African countries and, in particular, in LDCs;
19. **Urge** all the development partners (bilateral, regional and multilateral) to contribute to the implementation of the integrative and regional programme, most notably the "**Route du Coton**" (Cotton Road) programme, so as to ensure the development of value chains in the cotton sector of beneficiary countries, with a view to truly making this sector an instrument for creating jobs, combatting poverty and illegal migration, improving food security, and sustainable and inclusive economic and social development;
20. **Urge** our technical and financial partners to contribute to the implementation of integrative programmes and projects that could promote the production, processing and marketing of cotton and its by-products in accordance with the development component of the MC10 Ministerial Decision on Cotton.

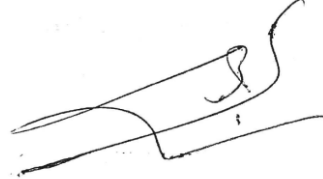
Done at N'Djamena on 16 November 2018

For the Republic of Benin



Mr Serge Mahouwèdo AHISSOU
Minister for Industry and Trade

For the Republic of Chad



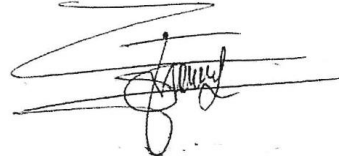
Mr AHMAT MAHAMAT BÂCHIR
Minister for Mines, Industrial and Commercial
Development, and Private Sector Promotion

For the Republic of Mali



Mr Alhassane AG AHMED MOUSSA
Minister for Trade and Competition

For Burkina Faso



Mr Joseph ZERBO
Representative of the Minister for Trade,
Industry and Crafts
