

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

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SWITZERLAND

Statement by H.E. Mr Pascal Couchepin
Federal Counsellor for Economy

The Doha Conference is evidence not only of our intention to strengthen the multilateral trading system, but also our willingness to achieve greater integration of the Middle East within our Organization by the accession of several of its States in the near future. The WTO will not accomplish its mission as a universal organization unless this part of the world, the political, economic and commercial roles of which are undisputed and gaining increasing significance, is strongly represented. The WTO makes it possible for all of its Members, irrespective of size and strength, to play a part in shaping the multilateral system and to defend their interests on the basis of law.

I should like to convey our sincere thanks to the Qatari authorities for their warm welcome and the excellent work in preparing for this important meeting.

A successful outcome to our work would help to improve confidence as between Members

combat these scourges effectively. Ensuring the protection of intellectual property pursuant to the TRIPS Agreement is also essential and will encourage research into and development of new drugs and therapies which meet the needs of all Members, whether they are industrialized or developing countries. Switzerland is ready to contribute to this vast effort and to use the flexibility of the Agreement on intellectual property in order to guarantee access to medicines for the poorest countries.

Third, it is essential for suitable instruments to be created worldwide for both investment and competition so as to ensure a stable, predictable and coherent framework for economic operators and governments.

Furthermore, it is vital for all partners concerned to join forces in the major work on the social dimension and globalization currently being done by the ILO. It is therefore only natural for the WTO Secretariat to be actively involved.

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