

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

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The new round of trade negotiation

The time of the launching of a new round of negotiations is also the time when the multilateral trading system has to make choices. The choice we must make today is whether to allow more countries, including developing and least-developed countries, to enjoy the opportunities and benefits brought about by the economic globalization, or to widen the gap between rich and poor countries.

The Lao PDR supports the launch of a new round of trade negotiation and holds:

First, the economic development of objectives of developing and least-developed countries and corresponding pattern of gradual market opening should be fully respected.

Second, developed countries should meet their obligations stipulated in the agreements of the Uruguay Round, and improve the market access environment for developing and least-developed countries.

Third, the formulation of new trade rules must have the full involvement of developing and least-developed countries.

Fourth, the coordination among developing countries should be strengthened, and their collective negotiation ability in the multilateral trading system should be improved.

Fifth, the new round of multilateral trade negotiations should focus on discussing issues related to trade. The Lao PDR holds that those issues that are not related to the functions of WTO such as labour standards should not be incorporated into the agenda.

Sixth, it is to be assured that new rule-making negotiations should allow substantial expansion of the special and differential (S&D) treatment provisions for LDCs, seriously taking into account their development needs and making these provisions more practical and responsive to the actual interests of the LDCs.

Seventh, the accession provisions should also be revised and include S&D issues in order to facilitate the accession process of the acceding LDCs.

The times are advancing and human being is progressing. We expect that all voices are being heard. Therefore we hope that through the joint endeavour of all the countries, the new round of negotiations will achieve satisfactory results.
