

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

WT/MIN(03)/ST/110
13 September 2003

(03-4901)

MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
Fifth Session
Cancún, 10 - 14 September 2003

Original: English

SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

Statement by H.E. Mr Ellsworth John
Ambassador to the United States

~~Sweden at the invitation of the invited Foreign Minister Anna Lindh. She was well loved and respected by the people of~~
country's and economic development.

about to meet in its General Assembly to address the challenges of regional conflicts, hunger, poverty and of course terrorism that threaten the very foundation of national and global security. It also comes at a time when the Caribbean region is challenged by the vagaries of the weather.

But it is not only the seasonal tropical storm that poses a threat to Caribbean small island developing states such as my country St. Vincent and the Grenadines. We are concerned about the possibility of sliding down the slippery slope of undevelopment even as other regions and countries discuss sustained economic growth and developed countries seek through multilateral institutions like the WTO to increase an already sizeable share of the global market and wealth. This concern is made real by multilateral rules and disciplines that are insensitive to the needs and nature of Small Island Developing Countries like ours. In this regard, we must point out that paragraph 35 of the Doha Declaration should be given full effect, for it must be recognized that despite its good intention there remain contradictions that must be examined so that the outcome of the work mandated therein is not prejudged.

The potential of this august body in terms of its ability to influence our economic and even political outcomes is profound. However, successive Rounds have failed to deliver sustained economic benefits and too many of our countries have been left in the margins of development. The mutually beneficial results promised in the Uruguay Round remain elusive to over two-thirds of the one hundred and forty-eight Members.

The second paragraph in the Marrakesh Agreement establishing the WTO gave recognition to an international trade system that is fair and equitable when it is "conducted with a view to raising living standards, ensuring full employment ... and steadily growing volume of real income". I highlight the word "conducted" because it must be understood that the Rules and Disciplines guiding these relations must give recognition to the levels of development of the constituents and that interpretations and operationalization of these rules and disciplines by all constituents must be in the good spirit of the initial intent. The widening economic gaps and progressive marginalization of the majority since the Uruguay Round must be addressed and adequately reflected in the Ministerial Statements coming out of this Fifth Ministerial Conference.

It is understood that many issues will continue to engage the attention of this Conference over the rest of its five day duration. We hope the following issues, which are of critical importance to us andwD.7.) o.50008Carib o.50buao

These include:

- The structural disadvantages and vulnerabilities of small developing economies,