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Statement by H.E. Dr Miroslav Somol
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I should like first of all to associate myself fully with the words of gratitude to the authorities and people of Mexico and of the city of Cancún for graciously hosting this Ministerial Conference.

Like many others, I too wish to congratulate Minister Derbez on his assumption of the Chairmanship. We have no doubts that the heavy responsibilities incumbent upon him are in good hands. It will give us a great deal of pleasure to cooperate with him in every possible way.

Our thanks go also to the Chairman of the General Council, and to the Director-General and his staff for their hard work in preparing for this Ministerial.

At the Conference held in Doha, Ministers unanimously expressed their readiness to participate in the broad and balanced work programme which is beneficial to all Members and results in more economic growth, employment and sustainable development worldwide. It was a demonstration of a collective will to secure further trade liberalization, as well as to bring about a strengthened and expanded multilateral trading system, one which is sufficiently responsive to the challenges of today's world. To bring into focus one of the overriding objectives of the programme, namely that of integrating the development dimension into all areas of the negotiating agenda, Members gave it the name of the Doha Development Agenda.

It is now less than two years since the negotiations got underway. Two years of intensive work and cooperative effort to strive for some progress across the wide range of topics and break the key deadlocks along the way. During that period, many proposals have been tabled and various reports produced which all testify to the enormous amount of work accomplished to date.

This is not to say, however, that there is any room for complacency. Much more could, should and must be done. Disturbingly too many key issues remain to be settled. A number of

missed the deadline for participation in the Doha Development Agenda. This is a lack of leadership

multilateral system of registration and by recognizing that the extension of additional protection to other products is an integral part of the ongoing negotiating process.

Similarly, much still remains to be accomplished if we are to benefit from synergies that exist between an open trading system and protection of environment. Failure to do so will compromise this institution's ability to play a fuller role in the pursuit of the increased international policy coherence and will be understood by the outside world as portent of failure to address the wider issues related to the WTO.

The deadlock on the modalities for the Singapore Issues must be broken and negotiations launched here at Cancún, as foreseen by the Doha Ministerial Declaration. All four issues are a part of a single undertaking and we stand ready to do all in the endeavour to achieve results satisfactory to all Members.

This brings me to a final comment; the need to promote full participation of developing and least developed countries in the ongoing negotiations and multilateral trading system in general. To enable these countries to reap the fruits of new market opportunities, greater attention has to be given to their particular problems, interests and situations.

To conclude, I wish to reiterate once again that the Czech Republic is firmly committed to the mission and objectives of the WTO. In this regard, we stand ready to contribute, and very soon as a new member of the European Union, to a final success of the Doha Development Round.
