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ROMANIA

Statement by H.E. Mr Eugen Dijmarescu,
Minister of Commerce

First of all, I wish to convey to the Government and the people of United States of Mexico, on behalf of the Romanian delegation, the gratitude for their hospitality and the excellent arrangements for holding this important Ministerial Conference.

I would, also, like to welcome the tremendous efforts and excellent work of the Chairman of the General Council, the Director-General and the Members of the WTO in striving to prepare the draft of the Ministerial Declaration as a middle ground between the various positions expressed by the Members.

The draft presented to us is even more valuab

I take this opportunity to reiterate that Romania, as a candidate country negotiating its accession to the EU, pays special attention to the process of harmonization of its trade policies with those of the EU.

Nevertheless, we have to consider the economic development gaps that still exist between us. Therefore, Romania attaches particular importance to the role of developing countries in the trading system and encourages the adoption of special and differential provisions.

The agricultural sector is for Romania, as well as for other countries, the most sensitive sector in terms of economics, politics and social security. Agriculture is the foundation of society in every country. We have, also, to admit that there are differences in the natural conditions and the historical background from one country to another.

Therefore, we think that the diversity and coexistence of agricultural features among various countries need to be preserved. This can be achieved by supporting those modalities which allow the continuation of the reform process initiated in this sector. At the same time, Romania is one of the supporters of the non-trade concerns approach and we consider that it is worth to analyse agriculture in its entire environment: food security, tradition, culture, population settlements, protection and development of tourism and environment.

Given all of the above, we strongly hope, and indeed believe, that there are still ways to successfully bridge the remaining differences between the positions of the Members regarding the negotiations on trade in agriculture.

In relation to the market access, we strongly support the proposal comprised in the Draft Ministerial Text, i.e. that negotiations shall aim to reduce or as appropriate eliminate tariffs, as the proper w a applicable, and we expect the other Members to bind 100% as a result of the negotiations on agricultural products.

At the same time, we would like to emphasize the importance of these negotiations and we hope Members are aware of the need to

We are sure that Ministers will give instructions to the Negotiating Group to finalize the modalities, with a view to conclude the negotiations by the end of the year. Romania supports further liberalization of trade in services and the development of the world economy. It is important to mobilize ourselves in order to finalize

We welcome the adoption of the Decision on TRIPS as an important step towards sending the world a message about our common and serious problems faced by certain developing and least-developing countries.

We are pleased to see that the Singapore Ministers have agreed to continue the work to develop a framework for a new trade agreement but we maintain our position on the

In conclusion, I'm sure that your experience and wisdom will enable us to find collective solutions to all the difficult issues within the on