

# WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

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**MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE**  
**Second Session**  
**Geneva, 18 and 20 May 1998**

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## COSTA RICA

Statement Circulated by H. E. Mr. Samuel Guzowski,  
Minister for Trade and the Economy

I should like to begin by expressing the sincere thanks of the Costa Rican Government to the Chairman of the Ministerial Conference, His Excellency Mr. Pascal Couchepin, Head of the Federal Department of Public Economy of the Swiss Confederation, to his Government and to the authorities of the Canton of Geneva for their hospitality in hosting this Conference. I also wish to convey our utmost appreciation to Mr. Renato Ruggiero, Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO), and to the Organization's Secretariat for their valuable work in organizing this meeting.

Together with the Second Session of the Ministerial Conference, we shall be celebrating the multilateral trading system's half-century of existence. This commemoration should provide an opportunity for paying tribute to the invaluable support that the system has lent to the economic growth of so many countries and the prosperity of their peoples. We believe this is a propitious occasion for reviewing the road we have travelled so far and for fixing the Organization's objectives for the future.

This Ministerial Conference should allow us to examine various fundamental elements of the multilateral tradteral

