

for all parties to confirm their attachment to the process of worldwide trade liberalization. We should strive for the elimination of barriers to the free flow of goods and services to the maximum possible extent, within the framework of a rules-based multilateral system that offers fair and predictable conditions to all. Under such conditions, international trade will contribute to an optimal international division of labour and as a result to sustainable development and prosperity for all participants.

The WTO Agreements adopted at Marrakesh have strongly contributed to the strengthening of the multilateral trading system by a substantial further opening of our markets and by

full integration of developing countries in the multilateral trading system; on the other hand the need for a comprehensive dialogue with the general public and greater transparency in the WTO, so that the public gets a better understanding of the benefits of trade liberalization and has the opportunity to express its interests and concerns. For the Netherlands Government, the full integration of developing countries in the world trading system is of utmost importance. We should not impose our ideas and solutions on our economically less developed partners. In order to build confidence, we should take further steps towards full trade liberalization. In this context, I stress the importance of a comprehensive round of negotiations in balance of payments package, which reflects the interests of developing countries. Moreover, the

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specifically, we should continue and intensify our efforts aimed at full integration of the least-developed countries, along the lines agreed at the Ministerial Conference of Singapore and the High Level Meeting on Integrated Initiatives for the Least-Developed Countries' Trade Development of October 1997. I welcome the Director-General's Report on this issue. This, however, should not be the end of the process, but the starting-point for a further intensification of our efforts to enhance