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BURKINA FASO

Statement Circulated by H.E. Mr. Youssouf Ouedraogo,
Ambassador

Mr. Chairman, like the many speakers who preceded me, I extend to you my congratulations on the way in which you are directing the work of our Conference. On behalf of the Government of Burkina Faso, I thank the Government of the Swiss Confederation for the very warm welcome that has been given to the delegation I have the honour to lead at this session.

I also congratulate the Director-General of the World Trade Organization on the successful organization of the conference.

Burkina Faso is a founder Member of the WTO. As such, it wishes to reaffirm the primacy of the multilateral trading system as a framework capable of generating prosperity and promoting the well-being of mankind as a whole.

This means that particular attention should be paid to the concerns of the developing countries, with regard to implementation of the provisions of the Uruguay Round. Accordingly, we welcome the adoption of the integrated initiative in favour of the least-developed countries (LDCs) in October 1997, in accordance with the decision taken at the First Ministerial Conference in Singapore in December 1996.

We pay tribute to the developed country Members of the WTO for their action in pledging market access for products from the least-developed countries.

This is the right place to express special acknowledgement of the WTO integrated assistance programme, of which Burkina Faso is a beneficiary, which will enable the LDCs - through its implementation - to be more fully integrated into the world economy.

The least-developed countries (LDCs) must now emerge from the marginal position to which they are confined by their meagre share of world trade. For that purpose, it is essential that the assistance programme should be capable of going beyond its technical assistance objectives, in order to facilitate the genuine opening up of developed country markets to the products of our countries.

Such access should be based in the initial stages on the strengthening and broadening of the structures of production, and increased investment, to enable us to combat poverty effectively.

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In the face of the trend towards economic globalization, Burkina Faso reaffirms its support for the strengthening of the regional economic integration process, which is increasingly seen as one of the best ways of helping us to escape from marginalization and gradually take our place in the multilateral trading system and the world economy.
