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CYPRUS

Statement by H.E. Mr Yiorgos Lillikas
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Let me first join other speakers in thanking the Mexican Government for their generous hospitality and all those who were involved in the excellent organization of this important Conference.

We have gathered here at a very crucial time.

Under the present economic conditions we cannot ignore the importance of continuing progress in the world trade negotiations, nor the serious damage that a possible collapse of this Conference would entail for the global economy in general and the multilateral trading system in particular.

Cyprus remains committed to an agreement in the form of a single undertaking aiming at a comprehensive and balanced package of agreements which will reflect the interests of all Members - especially those of the developing countries in accordance with all objectives set out at Doha.

The results of the Doha Ministerial were rightly termed a Development Agenda. Let us use this Conference to respond effectively to the legitimate hopes of the developing world to address more vigorously the issues of poverty and underdevelopment.

We were more than happy a few days ago to hear about the new consensus in the area of drugs and health. This is a good example of a focused approach that led to tangible results. As a general rule, it is more productive to concentrate on real and specific problems and to avoid sweeping demands and generalizations. If we believe in free trade as an engine of development, we must keep together and avoid the temptation of asking others to do what we are not willing to undertake ourselves.

Having said so let me now focus on a few issues of particular concern to my country.

In the area of agriculture we believe that the EU-US text offers a very sound basis for an agreement and an opportunity that should not be missed by putting forward maximalistic demands. All of us have quite a number of additional concerns and reservations, but these can be dealt with at a subsequent stage.

Concerning the multilateral system of notification and registration of Geographical Indications of wines and spirits, Cyprus supports its adoption without unnecessary delay. Agreement has to be reached by the same date as that for modalities, in other areas such as agriculture. Additionally, we wish to move forward the negotiations on the extension of the protection of Geographical Indications to other products.

On non-agricultural market access, we are in favour of a single formula approach, in order to reduce, in particular, peak industrial tariffs across-the-board. We also support sectorial components where appropriate.

Services are a vital engine for economic performance. In Cyprus they account for more than 65 per cent of the GDP. We therefore support the tabling of meaningful offers, including in the financial, telecommunications and maritime sectors.

Concerns of small economies and LDCs need to be given particular attention. A meaningful package of special and differential treatment and trade-related technical assistance and capacity-building should be offered to them. We support the recommendations already agreed upon in Geneva, as well as the search for additional measures in favour of poor countries to assist them in integrating productively into the world economic system.

I hope that through our prudent deliberations, progress can be achieved at all levels. At the end of this Conference everybody must be able to return home with some tangible results and a strong message of hope.
