



BANGLADESH

Please check against delivery

Statement by

H.E. Dr. Iftexhar Ahmed Chowdhury

Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations

on agenda item 50: (a) International Trade and Development
at the Second Committee of the 60th session of the General Assembly
New York, 31 October 2005

Mr. Chairman,

Could I begin by extending my warm felicitations to Ambassador Ransford Smith, President of the Trade and Development Board; Also to Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD, an erudite colleague and friend from my Geneva days, for their analytical and insightful deliberations.

Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement of Jamaica made on behalf of Group of 77 and China. We would however like to stress the following:

Mr. Chairman,

The current pattern of integration of developing countries in the global economy has not brought about desired results. Benefits of integration vary according to the level of economic and institutional development of countries. Multilateral development and financial institutions have been fostering the notion that full integration to the global economy is the only way to the future. Reality dictates otherwise. Experiences show that developing countries need gradual, phased and strategic integration into the world trading system – which must be open, equitable, rule based, predictable and non-discriminatory, if they are to foster development.

We fervently hope that the upcoming Sixth WTO Ministerial Meeting in Hong Kong will produce such results. We all share the responsibility of a development-focused outcome of the Doha Work Programme. It is therefore imperative that decisions at Hong Kong ensure that Doha agenda are successfully negotiated by 2006.

Mr. Chairman,

Openness to trade and international financial system has exposed us to a fiercely competitive environment. It has increased our vulnerability to external shocks and forced us to undergo painful adjustments in our economies. On the other hand, globalization has not brought an end to narrow nationalism, selective exclusion and the pursuit of vested interests. Developing countries have paid for their openness and for their premature liberalization. They have learnt that government non-intervention is no guarantee to economic stability - market forces are not necessarily self-adjusting. Many presently developed countries have attained higher rates of growth without opening their markets, or by opening selectively. The developing countries need

sufficient policy space to better manage their integration. This was recognized in Sao Paolo, reiterated at the Summit. We expect that this recognition will find reflections in reality.

In order to realize the expected benefits of market openings, a “Doha-plus” trade-enabling development cooperation agenda is required. Aid for trade initiatives should go beyond compliance or enabling trade negotiations into deeper and sustained capacity building. This should include assistance to developing countries, in particular LDCs, to address supply-side constraints, lack of competitiveness and infrastructural inadequacies; making available special funds for microcredit and micro-projects in order to diversify LDCs’ production; providing post-ATC adjustment assistance; solving practical trade problems arising from liberalization, implementation and other related shocks; and helping with job creation.

An adequate financing facility needs to be built into the multilateral trading system. We welcome the endorsement of the Aid for Trade initiative at the recent meeting of the Development Committee of the IMF and the World Bank. We need to seek substantial and additional means and resources for aid for trade. It has to be additional to ODA, substantial and a predictable financial mechanism.

UNCTAD should play an important role in the area of aid for trade. In view of the evolving challenges UNCTAD must be strengthened to assist the developing countries in their technical cooperation and capacity building efforts.

Mr. Chairman,

I must make particular mention of the plight of the Least Developed Countries, who have been increasingly marginalized in global trade. Their share has steadily declined from 3.06 per cent in 1954 to a mere 0.68 per cent in 2004. To reverse this trend and to salvage these reeling economies of 740 million people, bound duty-free quota-free access has to be granted for their exports to all destinations on a secure, long-term and predictable basis. This access has to be made meaningful by incorporating realistic rules of origin provisions; certification and inspection requirements; and technical and safety standards. A targeted S&D package is necessary for the sectors and modes of supply of export interest to LDCs, particularly in regard to temporary movement of natural persons under Mode 4.

Mr. Chairman,

Only last month our leaders reaffirmed their commitment to build a safer, just and equitable world – free of the scourge of poverty and injustice. It is not beyond our means to achieve them. With a clear indication of political will we can attain “trade justice”. Let the benefits of trade reach the millions who languish in hunger and poverty amidst today’s unprecedented global prosperity.

I thank you.