



**United Nations
Conference
on Trade and
Development**

Distr.
GENERAL

TD/409
13 June 2004

Original: ENGLISH

Eleventh session
São Paulo, 13–18 June 2004

MINISTERIAL COMMUNIQUÉ OF LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

We, the Ministers of Landlocked Developing Countries, having met in São Paulo on the occasion of UNCTAD XI,

Recalling the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries, and the Almaty Ministerial Declaration endorsed by the UN General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session,¹

Recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration,²

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 56/180, 57/242 and 58/201 on the specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries,

Recalling also the Ministerial Communiqué of Trade Ministers of landlocked developing countries adopted at the Ministerial Meeting convened on the occasion of the WTO Ministerial Conference in Cancún, Mexico, in 2003,

1. *Recognize* that the seaborne and inland trade of landlocked developing countries unavoidably depends on transit to other countries and on their transit policies, enterprises and facilities. Additional border crossings and long distances from major markets substantially increase total expenditures on transport services, which erodes their competitive edge on the international market. Such a disadvantaged situation continues to lead to the further marginalization of landlocked developing countries from international trade and the world economy;

¹ See resolution 58/201.

² See resolution 55/2.

2. *Strongly stress* that excessive transport costs create a major effective barrier to foreign markets. The share of landlocked developing countries in international trade is on the decline. In view of this, the current negotiations on market access for agricultural and non-agricultural goods should give particular attention to products of special interest to landlocked developing countries. Landlocked developing countries should be granted special treatment in the World Trade Organization, taking into consideration their disadvantaged geographical location, which erodes their competitive edge. The WTO should make operational its work related to small and vulnerable economies. In this context, priority attention should be given to landlocked developing countries, which are doubly disadvantaged;
3. *Emphasize* the importance of trade facilitation measures for international trade. Priority attention should be given to the landlocked developing countries in implementing a technical assistance programme in the area of trade facilitation, as called for by the Doha Ministerial Declaration of the WTO;
4. *Undertake* to make joint efforts in international trade negotiations to secure greater market access for landlocked developing countries. In this regard, we agree to institutionalize a Ministerial Meeting of Trade Ministers of landlocked developing countries with a view to further revitalizing our concerted efforts in international trade negotiations;
5. *Request* the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, in cooperation and consultation with the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS) and other relevant institutions, to facilitate the efforts of landlocked developing countries in organizing an expert group meeting for trade negotiators and officials of landlocked developing countries to assist them to assess the post-Cancún process and consolidate their strategies for further negotiations;
6. *Emphasize* the need for the full and effective implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action, the first ever UN programme of action tailored to addressing the special needs of landlocked developing countries. Specific actions that need to be undertaken should be vigorously pursued at the national, regional and international levels;
7. *Invite* the United Nations system organizations, particularly UNCTAD and the regional commissions, and other international organizations, especially the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the World Trade Organization and the World Customs Organization, to undertake measures to implement the Almaty Programme of Action. In accordance with its mandate given by the General Assembly in its resolution 56/227, the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States is requested to enhance its work to provide coordinated and coherent follow-up activities. The Office of the High Representative should be equipped with adequate resources to effectively carry out its enhanced mandate given by the Almaty Conference;
8. *Commend* the continued efforts made by the Government of Paraguay as the coordinator of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries in Geneva, in close coordination with the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Chairman of the Group in New York, on matters related to trade and development.
