

**Statement by the LDC Coordinator  
General Council  
4 May 2010**

**Mr. Chairman,**

On behalf of the LDC Group, I wish to thank the Director General for his report on the state of play of the DDA negotiations.

During the Stock-taking exercise, we were able to identify where the main gaps in the negotiations lie. In some cases, the size of those gaps is clear. In other areas, a lot more technical work is required, while other areas remain politically sensitive requiring engagement at that level. Any attempt to delay the closing of gaps identified during the stock taking exercise, poses a real danger of Members reverting to the pre-stock taking positions, thus rendering the stocktaking exercise results irrelevant. In order to avoid this possibility, the negotiating groups should focus in the coming weeks on closing the main gaps so identified. This is the only way progress shall be gained.

The LDC Group continues to be concerned about the pace of the negotiations. In the field of law, there is a maxim that ‘ justice delayed is justice denied’. The LDC Group is certain that the same is true to the delivery of development through the DDA. For LDCs, a delay in the conclusion of the DDA is a denial of development.

We recall that Members of this organization have made significant development friendly decisions such as the decision on duty free and quota free market access in favor of LDCs; the modalities for the special treatment of LDCs under Trade in Services and the treatment of Cotton in an ambitious, expeditious and specific manner, among others . These decisions if implemented could facilitate economic growth in LDCs and lift the 12% of the world’s population residing in LDCs out of poverty. The only stumbling block is the so called ‘ gate way issues’ which the LDCs are not the architects.

In our view, it is time for Members to reaffirm their commitment to the objectives of development as stated in the preamble to the Marrakesh Agreement. In so doing, Members should consider invoking the provisions of paragraph 47 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration which states that

‘... agreements reached at an early stage may be implemented on a provisional or definitive basis. Early agreements shall be taken into account in assessing the overall balance of the negotiations’

**Mr. Chairman,**

Invoking this mandate will not only ensure that development concerns of the LDCs are dealt with but will restore the credibility of our organization. In assessing the overall balance of the negotiations, we submit that the issues of LDCs have no potential of distorting that balance. Indeed, how can a group of members with a share of less than 1% in global merchandise trade distort the overall balance of the negotiations?

**Mr. Chairman,**

There is need for this organization to put a human face to the concerns of LDCs and visualize how villagers employed on a cotton farm in Africa and living on less than US1 dollar a day are having to lose their lifeline because of the huge export subsidies maintained by some developed countries for their highly mechanized corporate farms. Where is the commitment on development?

The LDC Group, therefore is on terra firma to request for early implementation of those decisions where there is agreement on the basis that:

- a. There has been undue delay in concluding this Round;

- b. Any further delay is a denial of development;
- c. There is a real need to show some result out of this Round to restore credibility;
- d. Issues of interest to the LDCs cannot distort the overall balance of the negotiations.

In this regard, Mr. Chairman, the entire LDC Group is resolved to commence consultations based on a firm proposal for early implementation of decisions of interest to the Group.

We believe that this will be a meaningful contribution of the WTO to the forthcoming Conference on MDGs this year and the UN LDC IV Conference next year.