

20 August 2003

H.E. Mi., Carlos Perez Del Castillo
Chairman of the General Council
World Trade Organisation
154, Rue de Lausanne
1211 Geneva 21

Dear

SPECIAL AND DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT

The Preambles to the WTO Agreements recognize the special needs of developing and in particular least developed countries in relation to achieving their share of growth in international trade. The Special and Differential Treatment provisions elaborated both in the chapeaux and texts of the current WTO Agreements were designed to meet these special needs. They are therefore an integral part of the WTO Agreements and are of critical importance to this group of countries.

In terms of paragraph 44 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration, read with paragraph 12.1 of the Doha Decision on Implementation-related Issues and Concerns, the mandate to deal with Special and Differential Treatment falls in the ambit of the Committee on Trade and Development.

The work on Agreement Specific Proposals and Cross-Cutting issues that have a bearing on Special and Differential Treatment, should therefore be undertaken in the Special Session of the Committee on Trade and Development, whilst mindful of the supervisory role of the General Council over WTO subsidiary bodies.

We are deeply concerned that no meaningful programs has been achieved to warrant a decision on substantive issues by the Fifth Session of the Ministerial Conference and it is only after the compilation of the work that a decision can be made.

In view of the above, paragraph 11 of the draft Cancun Ministerial text should be amended to reflect the mandate given to the Committee on Trade and Development as elucidated earlier including the prevailing situation. The amendment should also reflect the guidance needed to expeditiously complete the work. mandated in Doha with a specific timeframe.

Please accept, Sir, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Yours