



## **Chairman's Statement from the High-level Round Table on Trade and Environment**

**Cozumel, Mexico, 9 September 2003**

1. Ministers, representatives of countries, and other participants at this high-level round table call attention to the ground-breaking significance of this meeting of environmental ministers, experts, international organisations and members of the civil society held in the lead-up to the WTO Ministerial Conference, and believe that future such opportunities for dialogue are needed to build momentum for a positive relationship between trade and environment.
2. The WTO's Doha Declaration reaffirms the commitment of the multilateral trading system to support sustainable development and states: "we are convinced that the aims of upholding and safeguarding an open and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system, and acting for the protection of the environment and the promotion of sustainable development can and must be mutually supportive." We pledge our support to the WTO in seeking to make this statement a reality.
3. This objective is mirrored in major international undertakings that address the relationship between trade and environment and in particular the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Millennium Declaration of the United Nations.

Participants at the round table focused on the following issues:

- Progress must be made on phasing out environmentally-perverse subsidies, and in particular those that also distort trade.
- Progress must be made on accelerating liberalization of environmental goods and services, including environmentally-friendly agriculture, based on common and transparent classifications and definitions, and in a way that maximize environmental and trade benefits for both developed and developing countries.
- In order to advance the mutual supportiveness of the trade and environment regimes, the compatibility of MEAs and WTO rules should be recognized. As a matter of urgency, the Cancun Ministerial Meeting should grant UNEP and the MEA secretariats observer status in relevant WTO bodies.
- It is important to ensure that the WTO not unduly limit the expression of market preference for goods and services that meet recognized environmental criteria.
- Progress must be made in resolving the issues that arise at the interface between the TRIPS Agreement and the Convention on Biological Diversity, in particular as they relate to protection of traditional knowledge and folklore.
- The participants salute the vision of the Mexican government in organizing those round table and trust that it will set a precedent for other such events, in particular those linked to major encounters of the trade policy community.