

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

WT/MIN(01)/ST/97

11 November 2001

(01-5681)

MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

Fourth Session

Doha, 9 - 13 November 2001

Original: English

PARTICIPATION OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND APPLICATION OF INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS, GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON FOOD SAFETY, ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH

Joint Statement Circulated by the Directors-General
of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations,
the Office International des Epizooties,
the World Health Organization,
the World Trade Organization and
the President of the World Bank

Food safety and animal and plant health are essential components of sustainable development, particularly as they contribute to public health, the reduction of poverty, food security and the protection of the environment.

The Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC), the Office International des Epizooties (OIE), and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) are the recognized instruments for the development of international standards, guidelines and recommendations to assist in ensuring food safety for human health protection as well as animal and plant health and to facilitating trade.¹ The objective of international harmonization of sanitary and phytosanitary measures is to reduce the need for individual countries to develop and justify their own measures, to limit disputes and to take advantage of international trade opportunities.

We are committed to strengthen the capacity of developing countries to establish and implement science-based sanitary and phytosanitary measures, to meet the sanitary and phytosanitary requirements of trade partners and to participate fully in the work of standard setting organizations in the establishment of international standards, guidelines and recommendations. To this end, the FAO, OIE, WHO, WTO, the World Bank and other multilateral, regional and bilateral agencies undertake technical assistance activities and investment in infrastructure, to assist developing countries in the establishment and implementation of appropriate food safety and animal and plant health measures.

We affirm our commitment to work together on the basis of our respective mandates and to further exploit the synergies between our organizations, standard setting bodies and other agencies. We agree to jointly explore a new technical and financial mechanisms for coordination and resource mobilization and to build alliances between standard setting bodies and the implementing and financing agencies so as to ensure the most effective use of technical and financial resources.

This statement is submitted to inform the Fourth WTO Ministerial Conference in Doha of our commitment to enhance developing countries' capacity to participate effectively in the development and application of international standards and in taking full advantage of trade opportunities.

¹ FAO provides the Secretariat for the IPPC. FAO and WHO provide the Joint Secretariat for the CAC.