



Developing country ministers made it clear at the 2001 WTO Ministerial meeting: trade is part of the mix, one of the vital and necessary solutions to poverty and underdevelopment.

DECISION IN DOHA

The Doha meeting's final declaration underscores the commitment of the international community to addressing the concerns of developing countries. It includes:

- an agreement that ensures developing countries have better access to important medicines while still recognizing the importance of patents;
- negotiations on improving access to agricultural markets, including reductions with a view to phasing out of export subsidies, and substantial reductions in trade-distorting domestic support;
- negotiations on improving access for non-agricultural exports from the least developed countries, with the eventual objective of duty-free, quota-free access; and
- negotiations on clarification of rules relating to anti-dumping and countervailing measures and rules on subsidies, especially related to fisheries, upon which many developing countries depend.

WTO members also committed to work programs on issues of importance to developing countries, including: small economies; trade and transfer of technology; intellectual property; and trade, debt and finance.

In addition, the WTO will discuss issues such as foreign investment, competition policy, trade facilitation and transparency in government procurement, with a view to future negotiations.

The Doha Declaration provided flexibility for developing countries to absorb, sequence and pace their adjustment to WTO commitments. It also underscored the importance of technical assistance to poorer countries—to ensure that they have the ability and infrastructure to participate in trade negotiations, and to implement the results.

At the next Ministerial meeting in Mexico in 2003, the Director-General of the WTO has undertaken to provide a full report on all issues affecting developing countries.

