

21/12/2005 ¼

Results of the Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in Hong Kong, December 13-18, 2005

These notes record the main outcomes in the area of agriculture achieved by the WTO's ministerial conference held in Hong Kong on December 13-18, 2005 as available in extracts from the draft final declaration of December 18, 2005.

The main outcomes are:

The "progressive and parallel" elimination of export subsidies to be completed by 2013 (but the date will only be confirmed upon completion of the modalities, currently in negotiation).

Elimination of developed countries' export subsidies for cotton in 2006.

Access without conditions or restrictions for all products from Least Developed Countries (LDC) to developed country markets and by voluntary development, in 2008; this provision applies to **97% of products originating in LDCs**.

The modalities

The modalities ought to be established no later than **April 30, 2006** and the lists of commitments by **July 31, 2006**.

Doha Round negotiations should be concluded in **2006**.

21/12/2005 2/4

1. A few points to recall for understanding the Hong Kong Declaration:

- **The Hong Kong Ministerial** is the sixth ministerial conference of the WTO. The ministerial conference is the supreme decision-making organ of the WTO and it should meet at least once every two years.

- **Previous Ministerial Conferences:**

- Singapore: December 9-13 1996
- . Geneva: May 18-20 1998
- . Seattle: November 30 – December 30 1999
- . Doha: November 9-13 2001
- . Cancun: September 10-14 2003
- . Hong Kong: December 13-18 2005.

- **The Doha Development Agenda**

The declaration of the fourth ministerial conference (held at Doha in November 9-13, 2001) provides the mandate for negotiations on a range of subjects including questions of implementation of agreements already in effect.

Excerpts : paragraph 2:

"The majority of WTO members are **developing countries**. We seek to place their needs and interests at the heart of the Work Programme adopted in this Declaration."

Paragraph 4:

"We stress our commitment to the WTO as the **unique forum for global trade rule-making and liberalization...**"

Paragraph 5:

"We shall continue to work with the **Bretton Woods institutions** for greater coherence in global economic policy-making. "

Paragraph 13:

"we commit ourselves to comprehensive negotiations aimed at: substantial improvements in **market access; reductions of, with a view to phasing out, all forms of export subsidies;** and **substantial reductions in trade-distorting domestic support.** We agree that **special and differential treatment** for developing countries shall be an integral part of all elements of the negotiations ..."

21/12/2005 ¾

2. The Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration

• Excerpts:

. **Paragraph 1:** "We renew our resolve to complete the Doha Work Programme fully and to **conclude the negotiations launched at Doha successfully in 2006.**

. **Paragraph 2:** "We emphasize the central importance of **the development dimension** in every aspect of the Doha Work Programme and recommit ourselves to making it a meaningful reality, in terms both of the results of the negotiations on market access and rule-making and of the specific development-related issues..."

. **Paragraph 4:** "We reaffirm our commitment to the mandate on agriculture as set out in paragraph 13 of the Doha Declaration.

. **Paragraph 5** provides for **three bands** for categorising countries by their level of trade-distorting domestic support. "the Member with the highest level of permitted support will be in the top band. The top band (which includes the European Union) will have the highest linear cuts. All developing country Members will be in the bottom band."

. **Paragraph 6:** "We agree to ensure the **parallel elimination** of all forms of export subsidies and disciplines on **all export measures** with equivalent effect to be completed by the **end of 2013**. . This will be achieved in a **progressive and parallel manner**, to be specified in the modalities, so that a substantial part is realized by the end of the first half of the implementation period...we will agree effective disciplines on in-kind food aid, monetization and re-exports...The date above for the elimination of all forms of export subsidies, together with the agreed progressivity and **parallelism**, will be confirmed only upon the completion of the modalities."

. **Paragraph 7:** "**We adopt four bands for structuring tariff cuts**". Developing country Members will self-designate an appropriate number of tariff lines as Special Products guided by indicators based on the criteria of food security, livelihood security and rural development, and they will also have the right to have recourse to a Special Safeguard Mechanism based on import quantity and price triggers.

21/12/2005 4/4

. **Paragraph 10:** ", we are resolved to establish modalities no later than **30 April 2006** and

to submit comprehensive **draft Schedules** based on these modalities no later than **31 July 2006**."

. **Paragraph 11:** Cotton "...we reaffirm our commitment to ensure having an explicit decision on cotton within the agriculture negotiations and through the Sub-Committee on Cotton **ambitiously, expeditiously and specifically** as follows:

:

- **All forms of export subsidies for cotton** will be eliminated by developed countries in 2006.
- **On market access**, developed countries will give duty and **quota free access** for cotton exports from **least-developed countries** (LDCs) from the commencement of the implementation period.

. **Paragraph 12:** "We urge the development community to further scale up its cotton-specific assistance...We welcome the domestic reform efforts by African cotton producers aimed at enhancing productivity and efficiency."

. **Paragraph 29:** TRIPs (trade-related intellectual property rights); "We take note of the report of the Chairman of the Special Session of the Council for TRIPs setting out the progress in the negotiations on the establishment of a multilateral system of notification and registration of **geographical indications for wines and spirits**,

. **Paragraph 47:** "...developed-country Members, and developing-country Members declaring themselves in a position to do so, agree to implement **duty-free and quota-free market access for products originating from LDCs** as provided for in Annex F."

Annex F: "(i) Provide **duty-free and quota-free market access** on a lasting basis, for all products originating from all LDCs by **2008** or no later than the start of the implementation period.

- (ii) Members facing difficulties at this time to provide market access as set out above shall provide duty-free and quota-free market access **for at least 97 per cent** of products originating from LDCs..."

. **Paragraph 47 (continued):** "We reaffirm our commitment to enhance **effective trade-related technical assistance and capacity building to LDCs** on a priority basis..."

Dimension
développement
Mandat relatif à
l'agriculture
réaffirmé
Elimination des
subventions à
l'exportation
Soutien interne

Le coton
Accès aux marchés
pour les PMA
Assistance
technique