

STATEMENT BY JAMAICA TO THE TRADE NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE

28 JULY 2005

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation would like to thank you for your extensive remarks and through you, the Chairs of the various negotiating Groups for their reports.

Mr. Chairman, we had set certain objectives and deadlines and we were not able to meet those objectives and deadlines. That is disappointing. We share that disappointment. We must bear in mind however that we are embarked on a major and very complex undertaking as prescribed in the Doha mandate and within the Framework Agreement agreed at the end of July of last year. We will need to redouble our efforts and importantly we should also draw the appropriate lessons. In that context we welcome this opportunity to put forward our views on the overall picture of the current Doha round of negotiations.

Agriculture

In Agriculture, we all acknowledge that it is a very difficult and complex area with divergent and conflicting interests. In that connection, the Market Access Pillar has

reduce the de minimis. This would have been an important confidence building measure and is, in our view, an opportunity that has been missed.

In the Export Competition pillar, while we recognize that paragraph 24 of the July Framework provides for the disciplines on export credits to make appropriate provision for differential treatment for LDCs and NFIDCs, we are also of the view that the export interests of small developing countries which need to make use of Export credits should not be unreasonably prejudiced by new disciplines. These countries are involved now or will be in the future involved in developing and launching new agri-export products. They would have a particular need for the use themselves of export credits and export guarantees on appropriate terms, and thus we believe that flexibility for small developing countries should be accommodated by the terms of the agreement to be reached on this issue, pursuant to paragraph 18 of the July Framework Decision on Agriculture.

On STEs, we would wish to ensure that developing countries, particularly small developing countries are exempt from new disciplines, as our exports under these entities are too small to create market distortions.

The accommodation we call for is one that recognizes that the results of these negotiations in NAMA should reflect the vulnerabilities of developing countries, such as my own, through appropriate flexibility and moderation in commitments. This is the intent of the proposal that some CARICOM members have put forward in this Negotiating Group and which is attracting growing support. We believe that moderation in commitments and flexibilities are fully consistent with the spirit and substance of the Doha mandate. Yet we note, for example, that it appears to be almost an assumption that developing countries, including small vulnerable members, will be expected to make tariff cuts in this Development Round which far exceed what developed countries, with their competitive industries, undertook to make ten years ago in the Uruguay Round.

Let me emphasize therefore some of the key principles that in our view should guide our work in NAMA, a vitally important area. We strongly believe that the principle of less than full reciprocity should be a part of the core formula in order to achieve a substantial difference in outcomes in the reduction commitments of developed and developing countries. Further, Jamaica attaches great importance to the separation of the principle of less than full reciprocity in reduction commitments and special and differential treatment as given effect through flexibilities.

stage other approaches which would erode or eliminate flexibility provided under the GATS and in the negotiating modalities.

It is very important, in Jamaica's view, that the process of liberalization be approached and undertaken progressively and with due regard to the implications for building domestic capacity, preserving policy space, and strengthening and diversifying services exports. We place a lot of store by the fact that the GATS does provide scope for this kind of approach to be taken through the flexibilities that are built into the Agreement itself. A renewed sense of commitment to this principle may well assist in alleviating some of the anxieties that clearly exist among some developing members.

Finally on Services, let me mention the capacity constraints. Some members, for example, do not have the capacity or the knowledge base in respect of other markets to make commercially meaningful requests. This must be borne in mind. These members are at the same time expected to make generous offers. It is not healthy in a Development Round for a significant number of developing countries to participate merely from the point of view of making generous offers without themselves participating actively in requests. We have no real data on this aspect of the negotiations so as to be able to assess the imbalance in terms of the actual pursuit of offensive and defensive interests on the part of developing members. What

commitments by developing and least developed countries. This is an important element of the development content of the Doha Round and must be adhered to, and not become another development casualty.

We hope this will be borne fully in mind by all members as we move to Hong Kong and beyond – and particularly as we seek to determine the exact nature and form of an outcome in the area of trade facilitation.

Rules

On Rules Mr. Chairman, the Doha Mandate emphasizes that “account shall be taken of the developmental aspects of regional trade agreements”. A large constituency of the WTO membership attaches great importance to the mandate in respect of regional trade agreements and we urge that close attention be paid to that area, and that it be treated as an important aspect of overall balance.

We welcome the fact that some important proposals have come forward in regard to RTAs and development, such as those from the ACP Group, the European Communities and China.

underestimating of adjustment costs and even of the potential for causing and/or deepening macro economic imbalances. Jamaica believes that unless we act in a focussed and sympathetic way to redress these matters the Development aspect of the Round may end up being largely in the nature of a deficit.

Mr. Chairman, Jamaica remains committed to the negotiations and to pursuing its interests as a small vulnerable economy with a view to arriving at a fair and equitable outcome.

Let me conclude by expressing my Government and delegation's appreciation to you for the manner in which you have presided over the TNC since the launch of the Doha Round. We remain confident that your work will bear edible fruit in Hong Kong.

Thank you.