
PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE ON THE WTO

Organized jointly by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the European Parliament

Fifteenth session of the Conference Steering Committee*

14-15 June 2007, IPU Headquarters, Geneva

STATEMENT

We are encouraged by the words of the WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy at the meeting of our Steering Committee. We understand that an interim agreement paving the way for an eventual conclusion of the Doha Development Round is within reach.

Three elements are crucial for the achievement of the interim agreement: the amount of the reductions in trade-distorting agricultural subsidies, in agricultural tariffs and in industrial tariffs. These also happen to be some of the most politically sensitive subjects in our countries.

To cover the remaining ground, WTO negotiators must pool their efforts and move negotiating positions closer to each other. As members of parliament with a mandate to oversee government action in the field of international trade, we are firmly convinced that this can be done. A compromise lies on the path of mutual, balanced and fair concessions, taking into account the overall world economic landscape and the enormous risks involved in a continued stalemate.

We urge all WTO members - and in particular the United States, the European Union and the G20 developing countries - to take the necessary steps to identify the proportions of possible concessions during the coming weeks. We undertake to ensure parliamentary backing for the conclusion of a real Development Round.

* Members of the Steering Committee from the following countries, regional parliamentary assemblies and international organizations were present at the session: Belgium, Canada, China, France, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Morocco, Namibia, Niger, South Africa, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, European Parliament, Inter-Parliamentary Union, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and the Secretariat of the World Trade Organization.