

PRESS RELEASE

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MOORE APPLAUDS FREE ACCESS FOR LDC EXPORTS BY EU

WTO Director-General Mike Moore today welcomed the decision by European Union Trade Ministers to give the world's forty-eight least-developed countries access to EU markets for all products except arms by the year 2009. He said this would substantively improve trading conditions for the world's poorest nations.

Mr. Moore congratulated Mr. Pascal Lamy, EU Trade Commissioner, for the tangible contribution to global trade and for firmly placing EU trade policy in the interests of development concerns. He also hailed the decision as a concrete demonstration of the EU's goodwill in the context of preparations for a new round of WTO trade negotiations, and preparations for the Third UN Conference on LDCs to be hosted in Brussels in May this year. Mr. Moore praised the leadership by Sweden, currently holding the rotating presidency of the EU, and expressed appreciation for the timely intervention of the UN Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan.

Mr. Moore noted the European Union decision follows significant measures for improved market access taken or proposed by many other WTO Members including Canada, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Norway and the United States. He expressed hope that other countries will also move to improve market access within the framework of a new Trade Round.

Mr. Moore has expressed hope that necessary complementary trade-related capacity-building measures, such as in the Integrated Framework for Least-Developed Countries, will be supported by development partners, including the G-8 countries at their forthcoming Summit, to assist poor countries to take advantage of improved market access opportunities.

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