

Trade Policy Review of Canada

Statement by Pakistan

21 March 2007

Mr. Chairman,

We join other delegates in extending our warm welcome to H.E. Gerry Salembier, Director General of Multilateral Trade Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canada and his high-level delegation to their eighth trade policy review. We thank the Secretariat for their efforts on factual data collection, and sharing it with the Members. We would like to appreciate the insightful analysis by the discussant, Ambassador Mario Matus and his frank opinion about the major concerns in Canadian economic and trade policies.

Mr. Chair,

The power-point presentation made by the Canadian leader of delegation this morning has been powerful and impressive. Canada has rightly been termed as a “resilient trading nation with stable policies and successful performance”. Being among top ten trading nations in the world, its expansion of trade has promoted growth as well as employment. Its prosperity profile with per capita GDP at US\$ 39,390 is ranked among the world’s highest. Increased exposure to international competition has energized Canada’s economy, spurred innovation, attracted foreign investment and created sizeable number of jobs. Unilateral trade liberalization, low tariff structure and predictable state institutions are the hallmark of Canadian trade regime; notwithstanding the higher duty rates on textiles, clothing, footwear, animal products and dairy products, ranging between 8% and 237.3% on an average MFN.

Mr. Chair,

Pakistan and Canada enjoy cordial relations. Our bilateral trade hovering around US\$ 600 millions for the past four years is keeping a steady pace. Textile products accounting for 80% of our total exports are however subject to higher import duties. We greatly appreciate the Canadian approach to trade and development, with respect to Paragraph 135 of their report, which reiterates their commitment to take into account the level of development of

the developing countries and their ability to implement new agreements, while giving preferences. We wonder as to when the Canadian authorities would think it appropriate to consider our case vis-à-vis other suppliers of these products, which may be at similar level of development, if not better, yet enjoying duty free or preferential market access for one reason or the other.

On trade facilitation, we are told that our containers face unnecessary delays upon reaching Canadian destinations for want of inspections, imposition of levies on inspections and diversion of cargo to other ports etc. About 4 years ago, the same was happening to the Canadian exports entering Pakistan's territory. When we removed certain bottlenecks unilaterally, we witnessed that the Canadian exports to Pakistan jumped by more than three fold. Since then they have been rising every year. We expect Canada to give us similar treatment or at least MFN treatment on trade facilitation.

We would also like to flag our concerns about immigration and visa policy of Canada. While we appreciate Canada's liberal policies about grant of visas to our professionals, who are in demand in Canadian market, our business leaders face serious problems in getting routine visas for even short business trips.

Mr. Chair,

Coming on to Doha Round now, we very much appreciate the leadership role of Canada in various fields. Ambassador Don Stephenson in particular deserves all the credit for moving forward NAMA negotiations by trying to bring convergence of widespread diversifications. As our partner in Cairns Group, we value Canadian commitment to enhanced market access in agriculture. Ambassador Stephenson and his team are forthcoming and contributive in services, rules and development issues as well.

We have submitted our written questions to Canada; and therefore would not like to repeat them here. While we await the written replies, we wish Canadian delegation an enjoyable stay in Geneva and a successful trade policy review.