

STATEMENT BY SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO

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**THE SPEECH OF Mr. PREDRAG IVANOVIC,
MINISTER OF FOREIGN ECONOMIC RELATIONS
AND HEAD OF DELEGATION OF SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO
AT THE ELEVENTH UNCTAD MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Please allow me, on the behalf of Serbia and Montenegro, to express my appreciation and gratitude to the Secretariat of the UN Conference on Trade and Development, as well as to our host, Government of Brasil, for their kind invitation to participate and speak at the Eleventh Ministerial Conference, here in Sao Paolo.

Serbia and Montenegro, as a long standing member of this organization, was supporting from the very beginning the important role of UNCTAD, which had a function of enhancing the development of developing countries, and in recent period, also transition countries. We believe that UNCTAD will continue to provide the necessary support to the less developed countries in their efforts to become actively involved in the process of creation of global economic trends, thus contributing in the best possible manner to their own, as well as to the overall development.

Allow me to remind you that, in the course of last couple of years, Serbia and Montenegro has made significant steps toward the establishment of the open economic system, based on strong private sector, principles of equity, transparency and rule of law, and that, in the framework of these preferences, it has put among its medium-term goals also the following: steady economic growth, integration into the international system, accession to the World Trade Organization and European Union. Along these lines of argument, I would like to stress that, in pursuing these goals, my country, and I believe other less developed countries would agree, is relying on strong support and assistance of all international organizations, especially UNCTAD. Great importance of UNCTAD I perceive in the assistance it provides for the countries in the process of accession to the World Trade Organization, as applies for Serbia and Montenegro. This especially relates to the support given for the acceleration of negotiating process and providing valuable consulting and technical assistance in human resources capacity building.

Stressing the need for greater coherence between national development strategies and global economic processes among our priorities, we believe that at the Eleventh Ministerial Conference, with joint efforts of all member countries, will be identified ways to make this relation as positive and lasting as possible. In order to achieve this, developing countries and transition countries should be included in the processes of global economic reform, and especially in the creation of financial and industrial policies, bearing in mind their specific needs and individual levels of development. Giving opportunity to the less developed to gradually open their sensitive markets in order to adequately protect themselves from unexpected and negative economic trends in the fluctuating global market, bears utmost importance. In this context, we expect that through relevant consulting assistance in the area of formulation and implementation of the national investment policies and technological development, UNCTAD will significantly contribute to the improvement of competitiveness of the countries in the global market.

In spite of the fact that globalization has, without a doubt, contributed to the acceleration of economic development, recent failure in WTO negotiations in Cancun illustrates numerous inconsistencies existing in the multilateral economic system. It is very important to have interests of developing and transition countries taken in consideration while crating new international regulations and disciplines, and especially during the new round of multilateral trade negotiations. Developed countries, as the greatest beneficiaries of globalization, should impede further deepening of the gap between the rich and the poor, through financial assistance and technological transfer, and one of the means is certainly also to give greater support to the strengthening of the relations between North and South.

Following these lines of argument, we welcome the idea to establish partnerships, employed in function of development, which would help in implementation of issues agreed at the Conference. In order for these partnerships to be succesfull in the long run, all of their protagonists ought to have same view on issues, problems and available options, and the most important is for them to share a common vision of what they wish to achieve. We are aware of the fact that implementation of strategies and action plans of these partnerships could represent a challenge, especially if we consider great discrepancies between partners themselves, but there are multiple benefits, therefore it is in everyone's best interest to put some additional effort in their survival.