

**STATEMENT BY GUYANA**

MADE 17 JUNE 2004

**AT THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE  
ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT**

**Eleventh Session**

**São Paulo, Brazil  
13-18 June 2004**

# GUYANA

## STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE CLEMENT ROHEE MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA

MADE on 17 JUNE 2004

AT THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE  
ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT  
Eleventh session

São Paulo, Brazil  
13-18 June 2004

## **REPUBLIC OF GUYANA**

### **STATEMENT BY HONOURABLE CLEMENT ROHEE** **MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE AND INTERNATIONAL** **COOPERATION.**

Mr. Chairman

Colleague Ministers

Representatives of International Organizations

Distinguished Guests

It gives me distinct pleasure to congratulate Brazil for hosting this XI Meeting of UNCTAD, here in the heart of its industrial powerhouse, Sdo Paulo.

Guyana and Brazil are neighbouring countries and this reality has imposed upon us the need to develop a special relationship that has resulted in mutual benefits for our respective peoples.

I would like congratulate UNCTAD on its Fortieth Anniversary. Congratulations are also in order for Mr. Rubens Ricupero, Secretary General of UNCTAD for his continued dedication and commitment towards the creation of a positive link between trade and development from his post at the helm of this Organization.

Mr. Chairman,

We applaud the efforts of UNCTAD" in promoting the development dimension of international trade from a developing country perspective. UNCTAD has effectively responded to the many concerns of the developing

countries and has offered noteworthy solutions by providing policy analysis, interventions and technical assistance to its Member Countries. We support these initiatives and would wish to record our thanks to UNCTAD for these efforts.

As a representative of a small country, I have a particular interest in the work of UNCTAD in relation to the problems affecting small economies and the issue of special and differential treatment, which they require to enable them to link their trade and development efforts more effectively. Small economies and other developing countries have a shared interest in the successful implementation of the UNCTAD work programme as it relates to these matters.

Mr Chairman,

Increasingly, many countries are coming to the position that small weak and vulnerable countries do not have the capacity to undertake further trade liberalization. In this regard, I would like to thank UNCTAD for the study which was recently released that examines options for small economies in the WTO agriculture negotiations. This study proved that most small economies face similar conditions to those of the Least Developed in terms of tariff reduction commitments in agriculture and market access - A case which small countries especially those which depend on preferential arrangements have long argued.

Regional integration and South-South regional trade agreements hold a special significance for small countries in terms of the potential for growth. The Global System of Trade Preferences Among Developing Countries (GSTP) is

of particular importance to them to generate additional trading opportunities especially at a time when these countries are losing their traditional preferential access to major developed markets

Mr. Chairman, many small developing countries have made important efforts at trade liberalization under very difficult circumstances however, they are yet to see the fruits of their labour. One of the reasons is that they lack policy space which would allow them a greater flexibility to pursue policies which are more appropriate to their economic structures and special circumstances. This policy space is vital for developing countries. We have noted with concern, the difficulty at this Conference in arriving at a text which takes on board this concept and which would allow UNCTAD to work on this issue.

We note the work done by UNCTAD in generating a positive agenda for trade and wish to underscore the importance of its continuance. There is however a large amount of policy analysis and research that UNCTAD still needs to do to fully comprehend and design policies for those countries especially the small, weak and vulnerable economies, which are trade dependent and have a keen interest in using trade as an engine of development and as means poverty eradication.

The recent surge of work on small economies by other international institutions bears this out. From a trade development perspective, it would be useful for UNCTAD to advance this work and to help design appropriate mechanisms likely to flow from such work.

We note the commitment to the appropriate measures to mitigate the adverse impact of the erosion of preferences

arising out of the ongoing market access negotiations. The international community should support preference dependent countries in their efforts to diversify their export base and develop new export markets.

In this regard, we would wish to see UNCTAD play a special role in line with the expressed desire by many developing countries not to outsource this to the traditional Bretton Woods Institutions but rather to involve of more development -oriented institutions. This is also in line with the need to ensure coherence for development.

The view that developing countries must assume responsibility for their own development should not be a matter for debate. The international community however should respond to the special needs of developing countries and assist them in their efforts to develop capacities and infrastructure for effective, informed and beneficial participation in international trade.

Again, in this regard, special concern must be given to small vulnerable countries whose needs are now increasingly recognized by traditional international lending and cooperation agencies.

We fully support the proposal that adequate resources should be allocated for these purposes. This should be done within the framework provided by our respective national development strategies and priorities.

In our view, this area of UNCTAD's policy response and contribution are of critical importance. We agree that concerted focus, should be put on the difficulties faced by commodity dependent developing countries and support the following measures:

- The provision of enhanced market access on a secure and predictable basis,
- Adequate technical and financial assistance,
- And strengthening of capacity and institutions, both the level of public and the private sectors,
- Investments in infrastructure,
- Domestic structural reforms and prudent transparent fiscal policies,
- Review of existing compensatory financing schemes.

Mr. Chairman,

The peculiar problem of small developing economies, including Small Island Developing States should be given special consideration. One of the few areas in which such attention has been received is in sustainable development. It note with satisfaction the efforts that are being made to ensure a successful outcome of the International Meeting for the 10 year Review of the Barbados Programme of Action for Sustainable Development which will now be held in Mauritius in January 2005.

One final comment.

There is a dimension that should not be ignored and that is, the urgent need to pay priority attention to the serious problems of commodity dependence and long term declines and sharp fluctuations in prices of commodities of export interest to developing countries. These problems seriously impede development and poverty eradication efforts of many developing countries. They also seriously limit their ability to service and repay their foreign debts.

Mr. Chairman,

Guyana is prepared and ready to collaborate with UNCTAD to ensure the successful implementation of our decisions ,strategies and work-programme over the coming years. By upholding the mandate given to UNCTAD forty years ago our success is assured.

Thank you.

São Paulo, Brazil

16/6/04.