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Salutations

On behalf of the GOJ let me convey a warm Jamaican welcome to representatives of the international organisations who are visiting from Europe and Latin America, as well as our colleagues from CARICOM.

I wish to thank the INTO secretariat for responding positively to the request to convene the workshop and to the International Development Bank/Institute for the Integration of Latin America and the Caribbean (IDB/INTAL) and the CARICOM Secretariat for providing additional funding and organisational support.

Quality of Life

The ultimate objective of trade policy must be the improvement of the quality of life of citizens the world over through the promotion of sustainable development.

This is central to the steps being taken to address the relationship between trade and environment. The last decade has seen increased attention to the question of trade and the environment.

It was the attempt by the us to ban Mexican tuna on the grounds that its fishing practices failed to meet us standards for dealing with dolphin kills and the declaration by the GATT that this us action was illegal which, helped to bring the issue of trade and environment centre stage.

This led to the incorporation of an environmental side agreement in NAFTA and renewed push for the incorporation of environmental and labour standards in international trade agreements.

It should be noted that before the advent of the INTO, Article XX of the GATT allowed governments to take measures to protect human, animal or plant life as well as measures related to the conservation of natural resources.

The article further explicitly required that any environmental action must be applied without arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination and must not constitute a disguised restriction on international trade.

The push to strengthen the linkages between trade and the environment lead to the incorporation in the preamble to the Marrakesh agreement establishing the INTO the statement that the INTO would "ensure the optimal use of the worlds resources in accordance with the objective of sustainable development".

Sustainable Development

As we proceed to deliberate on the issues on the programme of this seminar, we should pause to reflect upon the broad goals of sustainable development agreed in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. At that summit the world committed itself among other things to the goals of ensuring:

- The right of every human being to healthy and productive life in harmony with nature
- That development efforts do not endanger the prospects of the living and those yet to be born
- The eradication of poverty everywhere and the reduction of disparities in living standards.

These goals are as valid today as they were when our leaders agreed upon them 11 years ago.

However, the importance of these goals for trade policy makers has never been more significant.

We are in a period when, certainly for CARICOM, the range and scope of trade arrangements being pursued are unprecedented.

In the WTO, we are struggling to make on the Doha Development Agenda even as we transform our relationship with Europe through the negotiation of economic partnership agreements and in our hemisphere, we fast approach the deadline set for the creation of the world's largest Free Trade Area.

In all of these efforts the issue of the environment and its impact on trade and development are becoming important factors with requirements for environmental impact studies.

We in CARICOM must define the terms under which these two important issues are addressed and ensure that in treating with them we advance the goal of sustainable development.

We must be guided by the principle of "equitable global partnerships" in which the handling of the environmental question is a means of supporting better trade relationships and improved it must not be seen as a tool to be used by the powerful to erect barriers to trade which disproportionately hurt the weak.

Environment and Poverty

In addition to securing the goal of sustainable development these efforts must contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of all especially the poor. This will necessarily mean the reduction of global inequalities between rich and poor nations and within nations.

With over 1.1 billion people (just under 20%) of the world's population living in absolute poverty, often in terrible social and environmental conditions, it is clear that they need to be afforded greater access to the world's wealth for the purpose of reducing their poverty, improving their welfare and fostering sustainable development.

According to the 1998 human development report the richest 20% of the world's population that live in developed countries accounted for 86% of total private consumption while the poorest 20% accounted for just 1.3 %.

The richest 20% consumed 45 % of all meat and fish, the poorest 5%; the richest 20% consumed 58% of total energy, the poorest less than 4%, the richest 20% consumed 84% of all paper, the poorest 1.1%; the richest 20% own 87% of the world's vehicles and the poorest 20 % less than 1%.

Much of this is caused by the disparities in the competitiveness and productivity of rich and poor nations and the consequentially skewed distribution of the wealth that is generated.

Here in Jamaica, while we have been able to make drastic reductions in the level of poverty, we are still short of the mark as over 18% of the population, primarily in rural Jamaica, live in poverty.

MEAS and Trade

There continues to be some tension between the effort to address environmental issues in trade arrangements and the push to incorporate trade measures into Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).

We in Jamaica strongly support efforts to strengthen global initiatives for the protection of the environment and promote practices that ensure the safety of our food, water and air, and protect animal and plant life thereby enhancing the quality of life for all on this planet.

At the same time however we recognize that in address in a the trade and environment issue we must not cause environmental measures to be used as a barrier to trade and as a means of further advancing the interests of strong developed nations against developing nations.

With this caveat I can endorse fully the work that is being done to explore the relationship between trade and the environment.

The Conch Experience

To illustrate how relevant the issue of Multilateral lateral Agreements and trade is to Jamaica I wish to recall that in 2001, the EU imposed a temporary trade suspension on imports of queen conch from Jamaica. This action was taken on the basis of outdated information and without the benefit of appropriate consultation with the relevant Jamaican authorities or the cites secretariat.

The ban was eventually lifted after Jamaica submitted updated information involving extensive and costly research. If the ban had remained Jamaica would have lost significant market share and considerable foreign exchange earnings as well as lost investment and employment at the domestic level.

This was for us a painful and direct manifestation of the challenges that trade and environment provisions in Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) could pose to small economies.

I am pleased to note that despite those setbacks Jamaica's management strategy for conch has come to be lauded in cites and other international fora as one which queen conch exporting states could emulate.

While recognising the progress made in our management of this issue I must draw attention to the very real problems posed to our own efforts to ensure sustainable harvesting of conch and other marine resources by **poaching**.

This poaching in Jamaican waters not only decimates the fish stocks available for legal trade but also disturbs the ecological balance and seriously threatens the future of the fishing industry.

Jamaica and some other Caribbean states are not able to take advantage of the availability of tuna in our waters for export as only members of the international commission for conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT). Which currently governs trade in tuna and tuna-like species caught in the Atlantic are allowed to engage in export trade and are provided with quotas. Even our domestic consumption is regulated under ICCAT provisions.

Jamaica recognises that it is important to become a member of ICCAT but has concerns regarding the cost implications. A possible solution in this regard could lie in the designation of the recently established Caribbean regional fisheries mechanism as the competent authority for the region. This could be yet another valuable spin off from the effort to establish the CSME with the creation of common regional bodies in key sectors.

Small States Concerns

It is worth restating that in CANCLJN, CARICOM member states and other developing countries were united in their desire to ensure that development was indeed placed at the heart of the WTO work programme and that their interests were taken into account in the drafting of the ministerial declaration.

While the CANCUN meeting failed to reach consensus, it brought forcefully to attention the unprecedented commitment of developing countries to define and defend their interests in the WTO.

It is noteworthy that CARICOM and other states in advancing their agenda at CANCUN drew special attention to the concerns of small developing states. These include the peculiar concerns of small island developing states, especially issues of vulnerability which derive from their unique environmental circumstances.

CARICOM in its declaration, called on members of the WTO to recognize that 'the particular structural disadvantages and vulnerabilities of small developing economies, in particular small island developing states (SIDs), must be taken into account in the formulation and application of multilateral trade rules, as well as in the liberalisation undertakings required of these countries.

CARICOM continues to draw attention to the fact that small states are typically characterised by the two elements of vulnerability and dependence. They are disproportionately affected by shocks such as hurricanes, floods, and diseases. Furthermore, limited geographic space constrains their ability to adjust to these shocks as was demonstrated in Montserrat in the aftermath of the catastrophic volcanic eruptions there.

Capacity

In addition to concerns about the substantive issues of trade and environment, CARICOM delegations have been at pains to point out the impact of size and resource limitations on their basic ability to effectively engage in the negotiating process.

With less than 5 missions in Geneva, CARICOM member states are hard pressed to cover the WTO agenda which includes issues such as trade and the environment.

It is for this reason that seminars such as this are so valuable.

I encourage each and every one of the national representatives here today to grasp the opportunity to identify issues on the trade and environment agenda of interest and concern to all of us in the region and build on this knowledge in the period ahead. This is in order to strengthen CARICOM's voice on these issues on which it cannot be a bystander.

As a region we must become more fully involved in the negotiations and discussions in the WTO and other multilateral fora, as well as developments at the bilateral level with a bearing on trade and environment.

The region would benefit from assistance in the strengthening of compliance and enforcement mechanisms of regulatory agencies as well as improved capacity to engage in data collection and analysis.

Allied to this, the regional private sector would require support for research and development of appropriate trade and environment oriented technologies, products and processes to increase competitiveness.

Environmentally Friendly Products

I encourage the private sector in the drive for competitiveness to move to exploit the markets for products and services deemed to be environment friendly, forge alliances with entities that have the economic and technological base to spearhead their commercial exploitation.

The development of renewable energy products.

- . The production of organic foods,
- . The achievement of the ultimate seal of approval for environmental quality - the International Standards Organisation (ISO) 14000 certification by at least 5 Jamaican companies.
- . The securing of green globe certification by several tourism entities on the basis of the application of environmental standards to their tourism product
- . The efforts now being made to obtain blue flag certification with regard to the quality of our beaches and marinas;
- . all point to a growing recognition of the value of environmental consciousness not just among activists but among our business persons.

The move to initiate the environmental audits for sustainable tourism (east) project underscores government's commitment to "mainstreaming" environmental considerations in our major service sector-tourism.

East is a government of Jamaica US AID funded initiative, coordinated through the Jamaica hotel and tourist association (JHTA) and the Jamaica manufacturers association (JMA) to assist the tourism and manufacturing sectors in their implementation of environmental management systems. Since the project's inception in 1997, many companies in both sectors have realised significant cost savings and added value through the 'greening' of their operations.

Conclusion

I am encouraged to see that the programme for the next two days will not only focus on the historical underpinnings of trade and environment within the WTO and the Doha development agenda, but will also provide useful opportunities for an exchange of views on the trade and environment agenda.

I trust that your discussions will provide valuable insight into the specific needs of the Caribbean in the area of trade and environment and help to identify solutions to the various challenges that arise in this area.

I thank you.

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