

BRAZIL

- PAULO E. DE MESSQUITA

**International Symposium on  
Environmental Requirements and Market Access  
3<sup>rd</sup> October 2007**

**Opening remarks**

~~Mr. Supachai, Mr. Kakabadse,~~

Allow me first to thank UNCTAD and UNEP for this initiative and the kind invitation to take part in it.

A lively debate has been taking place today in many *fora* on the so called environmental goods. This is not different in the WTO. The Special Session of the Committee on Trade and Environment has been actively discussing the liberalization of such environmental goods and services.

There, as well as in the other negotiating committees, Brazil has recalled that members should not lose sight of the developmental perspective that defines the very essence of the Round. This implies that the debates on the liberalization of trade in environmental goods and services cannot be understood only as a supply-sided opening of markets. It has to enhance the participation of developing countries in trade and their capacity to develop their own environmental goods industry and technologies.

I note with satisfaction that Brazil, UNCTAD and UNEP share exactly the same concerns, that is, how to guarantee and expand the participation of developing countries in key import markets, in a context of proliferation of environmental requirements and private standards.

Both in the agricultural and industrial sectors private standards may act as non-tariff barriers to products exported by developing countries. They are particularly hard to meet by small providers. The high costs involved in the certification process and the technical difficulties imposed by private requirements can contribute to the creation of niche markets, which benefit only a limited number of providers.

In fact, just yesterday, 2<sup>nd</sup> October, Brazil introduced a new proposal in the CTESS, addressing this often forgotten element of the mandate, which is the reduction or elimination of non-tariff barriers. The elimination of such type of barrier is also of paramount importance for attaining the "triple win situation", that is to say the promotion of trade, development and environment.

To this end, Brazil proposed that the CTESS examines the possibility of requesting that relevant committees of the Codex Alimentarius establish detailed rules for the certification of organically produced foods. The elaboration and adoption of a common set of standards would represent an improvement on the voluntary directives in place today. This would assist in the development of a potentially large sector of agriculture that is heavily affected by non-tariff barriers.

The harmonization of standards would be a necessary and significant step towards the promotion of trade, environment and development. Organic agriculture production is frequently small property based, and its development could pave a route out of poverty for a significant number of small farmers in developing countries.

A commitment by WTO Members to adopt an internationally defined set of standards, replacing the multiple and currently diverging sets of national

parameters, would be an important contribution to the liberalization of trade in organic agriculture. It would benefit a number of developing Members while promoting the objectives of sustainability enshrined in the CTESS negotiating mandate.

Initiatives like this Symposium go hand in hand with the development objectives of the Round. They provide developing countries with analytical and empirical input to find out creative solutions. As we will probably confirm by the testimonials to be given today, alternative solutions are necessary to better tackle the challenges posed by private standards and environmental requirements.

In concluding my intervention, allow me Mr. Supachai and Mr. Kakakhel to wish the participants a fruitful debate and to congratulate UNCTAD and UNEP for this initiative.