

**Committee on Agriculture  
Special Session**

Original: English

**SEVENTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
26-28 MARCH 2001**

Statement by Swaziland

1. The Swaziland delegation wishes to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, for the most able manner in which you have guided our deliberations during Phase I of the negotiations process. Our delegation assures you of its utmost support.
2. The Swaziland delegation concurs with the view that Phase I of the WTO agriculture negotiations has been very successful. The large number of negotiating proposals tabled as well as the large number of member countries involved in the debate of the proposals testifies to this. Of particular importance, from the perspective of Swaziland, is that views of small developing countries were genuinely listened to and debated.
3. At this juncture, we wish to highlight what we consider as critical issues, which have emerged under Phase I and will be subjected to in-depth analysis and discussion under Phase II. Because of the time constraint, we shall be selective in the issues to be highlighted. We shall be guided in this selection by our own circumstances in the quest to be fully integrated into the global trading system.
4. One of the issues to be highlighted is the special and differential (S&D) treatment of developing countries. This is a cross-cutting issue which is not only explicitly recognized under Article 20 of the Agreement on Agriculture, but has also been extensively analyzed in very many of the proposals already tabled. In this connection, it is heartening to note that S&D has been explicitly incorporated as a vital cog in the work programme for Phase II.
5. A second issue to be highlighted is the plight of small, least developed, land-locked and island developing countries. An impression gathered from the debate that has gone on so far is that there is an imperative for this class of countries to be accommodated adequately in the continuing reform process. The issue is no more whether or not they should be adequately accommodated. The issue is how to accommodate. It is hoped that the work under Phase II will enable an efficient and equitable solution to this question. It should be efficient in the sense of integrating these countries well in the global trading system. Clearly this will not happen if the present benefits gained under preferential arrangements are lost. It should be equitable in the sense of genuinely helping these poorer countries move up the ladder of human development.
6. A third issue is the need to treat preferential market arrangements in an imaginative, innovative and flexible manner. It is recognized that at some point in the future these arrangements will be dismantled. But the question is when and how. A further question is what happens in the interim before the arrangements are dismantled. It is in answering these questions that imagination, innovation and flexibility are necessary. They are also necessary because of the close linkages that often exist between preferential benefits accruing to small, least developed, land-locked and island developing countries on the one hand and the various forms of support prevailing in developed countries granting those preferences.

7. A fourth point to be highlighted is interest showed in the various proposals on non-trade concerns (NTCs). What has emerged is the fact that different countries place different emphasis on the different types of NTCs. It now remains for Phase II to grapple more closely with the issue of NTCs to come up with a compromise solution that is both efficient and equitable.

8. Finally, the Swaziland delegation would like to observe that the work under Phase I has generated considerable momentum. This is particularly noteworthy given the uncertainty that prevailed after the failure of Seattle. We are conscious of the forthcoming Ministerial Meeting in Qatar in November 2001. Whilst the outcome of that meeting cannot be pre-judged, we would find it a great pity that the momentum generated so far is lost as a result of that meeting.

9. Turning briefly to the work under Phase II, the only thing we would like to add is that the limited negotiating capital possessed by delegations from most small, least developed, landlocked and island developing countries should be fully taken into account. We appreciate the flexibility exhibited by a number of the larger-resourced delegations. We only plead that they help all of us make the development component of these negotiations meaningful.

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