

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

Statement by India

1. We share the satisfaction expressed by various other delegations on the progress made in the first phase of negotiations. We also note that 44 proposals have been submitted by 125 Members during the first phase. Still heartening to note is the active participation by many developing countries in the discussions on these submissions in the six Special Sessions of the Committee on Agriculture.
2. In an organization with a membership of 140, representing every conceivable stage of economic development, it is almost axiomatic that no single set of proposals could ever fully satisfy all the country-specific needs, as well as aspirations of the entire global community. At the same time, country proposals must go beyond not only their national concerns but must also respect and take account of the developmental and societal needs of other countries and regions and seek out common elements which, in the first place, brought us all to this multilateral negotiating table. I am indeed happy that the proposals made by the national delegations fully reflect this approach – of identifying those issues where there is convergence as also where search for greater symbiotic action - is a desirable objective.
3. The proposals which have been submitted have also clearly brought out the concerns of all countries and have brought out the peculiarities and special characteristics of agriculture and the sensitivities involved. We have noted the overwhelming concerns expressed by several developing countries about the inequitous nature of the existing agreement and the need to carry forward the reforms while removing the trade distortions caused by the developed countries.
4. The developing countries, during the 6 years of implementation of AoA, experienced the adverse effects of the trade-distortive policies pursued by developed countries in terms of threatening the livelihood of their people and also in impeding their export of agricultural products.
5. In this context, we are confident that the second phase of negotiations would address upfront these distortions being caused by high levels of support and protectionist policies being followed by many developed countries. This is neither ambitious nor should be construed as a precondition to negotiations. We would also underline the need for concretizing special and differential treatment for developing countries in a clearly implementable manner as opposed to best endeavour clauses. These S&D provisions should be drawn up as an integral part of the negotiating process to enable developing countries to tackle their special concerns such as food and livelihood security while reforming agricultural trade.
6. It has more or less been established that Marrakesh, was long on promise but short on performance. Our perception is that the reason for hiatus in the expectations and achievements is to a great extent due to existing ambiguities and lack of rigor in the reduction commitments in the Agreement leading to circumvention of these commitments by some Member countries. Removal of these ambiguities and flaws lies at the heart of the Agreement on Agriculture, to improve the implementation of the commitments. Existence of these flaws undermines the public trust in the sanctity of the negotiated outcome as well as the motivation for taking the inequitous reform process any further through new obligations.

7. In today's world, where plurality of institutions in a civil society is a global reality, WTO agricultural negotiations in the future will be able to withstand public scrutiny and win wider support only when the negotiated outcomes are fair and equitable and are respected, observed and sincerely implemented by all Members.

8. During the 2nd phase, we underscore the need to facilitate equally active participation of developing countries in this phase – in terms of better logistics for meetings and the technical work to be done by the Secretariat.

9. In conclusion, please allow me to join the previous speakers in congratulating you for your eminent leadership in safely steering the first phase of negotiations. We also wish God's speed to the new Chairperson for an equally successful conclusion of the second phase of the reform process.
