



ASEAN Joint Statement

By

His Excellency Mr. Sun Suon

Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Cambodia
to the United States Office, the World Trade Organization
and other International Organizations at Geneva

At

2nd Working Party Meeting on the Accession of
Afghanistan to the WTO

(18 June 2012, Geneva)

ASEAN Statement
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on the Accession of Afghanistan to the WTO
18 June 2012

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of ASEAN. First of all, allow me to thank you, Mr Chairman, for convening the 2nd working party meeting on the Accession of Afghanistan to the WTO. My appreciation goes also to the WTO Secretariat's staff for the documentation and their excellent arrangements they have prepared for our meeting.
2. I would like to warmly welcome the Delegation of Afghanistan headed by H.E. Mozammil Shinwari, Deputy Minister of Commerce and Industries, to this important working party meeting. I wish to thank him for his opening statement on the progress made since the last working party meeting.
3. ASEAN fully supports the accession of Afghanistan to the WTO. We are appreciative of the submissions made by Afghanistan on the replies to questions raised by members on various areas of its foreign trade regime at the last working party meeting, legislative action plan, the initial service offer and other related documents. The submitted documents are important and serve as a basis for our members' consideration and discussion today. ASEAN commends Afghanistan for the enormous efforts it has made to move the accession process forward, which signify its commitments to the multilateral trading system.
4. As Afghanistan is an LDC, ASEAN calls upon members that are involved in bilateral market accession negotiations with Afghanistan, to take into account the 2002 LDC Accession Guidelines and the current work being undertaken by the Sub-Committee on LDCs on updating and streamlining the 2002 Guidelines. Afghanistan should only be asked to make market access commitments that are commensurate with its development status, financial and trade needs. In addition, adequate flexibilities and transition periods should be provided to Afghanistan for the implementation of its commitments after the accession.

Mr. Chairman,

5. In conclusion, coordinated and targeted technical assistance and financial support are essential for Afghanistan's reform programme both during the accession and post accession period. ASEAN call upon the WTO Secretariat, WTO members and other specialized International Organizations to help Afghanistan in its reform efforts to bring its foreign trade regime in line with international practices and WTO rules, which will benefit both Afghanistan and the membership.

Thank you.