

“BALI N’EST QUE LE DÉBUT” — AZEVÊDO DG de l’OMC

Dans un discours prononcé au cours d’un séminaire diplomatique à Lisbonne, le 6 janvier 2014, le Directeur général, M. Roberto Azevêdo, a dit ce qui suit: **“Renforcer le système multilatéral et faire avancer l’exécution du Programme de Doha pour le développement sera difficile — mais pas impossible. Beaucoup ne pensaient pas que nous pourrions obtenir des résultats à Bali, et à juste titre. Mais nous y sommes parvenus — et nous pouvons faire plus. Bali n’est que le début.”**

Ci-après un extrait de son discours :

“Le paquet de Bali a impliqué un grand nombre de mesures qui sont très importants pour tous les membres. Elle a porté sur trois domaines importants, et je vais prendre chacun à son tour.

The Bali Package :

The first pillar is Agriculture. This is the cornerstone of the Doha Development Agenda which the WTO has been working on since 2001. Agricultural issues are very dear to developing countries, and the Bali Package delivered some important outcomes.

For example, it sets us on track for a reform of export subsidies and measures of similar effect, and it makes practical progress towards better implementation of the tariff quota commitments assumed in the Uruguay Round. There is also a reaffirmation and a deepening of the political commitments assumed in Hong Kong on trade liberalization and the reduction of distorting support to cotton — a very important issue for the African countries that grow that crop.

The Package also provides temporary protection for food security programs in developing countries, which allow for the stockpiling of grain for subsequent distribution to the poor. As we know, some of those countries could be exposed to legal challenges in the WTO for exceeding the limits stipulated in the Agriculture Agreement for certain types of domestic support. So, in addition to the temporary protection against legal challenges, the Bali Agreement states that a permanent solution will be negotiated and concluded before the 11th Ministerial Conference in four years' time.

The second pillar of the Package is Development. Here, a monitoring mechanism will provide for the review and strengthening of special and differential treatment provisions for developing countries, which are contained in all WTO multilateral texts. This achievement is vital for the equilibrium and efficacy of the multilateral system.

There are also a number of specific measures to support the Least-Developed Countries.

They include reforms that would enable services providers in LDCs to enjoy new export opportunities in developed country markets.

They also include steps to simplify rules of origin, which again will open up new export opportunities for those countries specifically.

Under this pillar we will also see improvements in trade preference arrangements which extend exemption from tariffs and quotas to LDC exports.

The third and final pillar is Trade Facilitation, which sets out to simplify and modernize customs procedures, and make them more transparent, thereby reducing transaction costs. The Agreement on Trade Facilitation will be able to provide a significant — and today much-needed — boost to the global economy, delivering growth and jobs. This could be worth up to \$1 trillion per year to the global economy — generating up to 21 million jobs.

Significantly the Agreement also ensures the provision of technical assistance to support developing economies and the least-developed economies to implement these modernizing reforms, and therefore help them integrate better into global trade flows.

Clearly estimates can vary, but, once the Agreement is implemented, there could be an expansion in developing country exports of up to 10% — compared to a 4.5% expansion in developed countries.

It is true that the deal represents only part of the Doha Development Agenda. But there can be no doubt that this is a significant package that will provide a considerable economic boost and improve the lives of millions of people around the world — particularly among the poorest and in countries whose economies have stalled and are suffering high levels of unemployment.

In the specific case of the European Union and its member States, the conclusion of the Bali Package reflects that grouping's chief negotiating objectives. With the Agreement on Trade Facilitation, opportunities for expanding trade will clearly increase. The Agreement also offers potential to facilitate the internationalization of small and medium-sized enterprises, which are important drivers of job creation and income distribution in many European countries. “

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