

**Gareth Thomas MP, Minister of State, Department for
International Development – Speech to the World Trade
Organisation 7th Ministerial Plenary Session**

I would like to make three comments today based on three crises the world is facing; the economic crisis and the recovery, poverty in the developing world, and climate change.

First, the DDA and the WTO's protectionism monitoring are critical steps towards long-term economic recovery after this deep financial crisis. The DDA alone could boost the global economy by around \$170 billion annually.

We welcome commitments that have been made at the G20, and elsewhere, to conclude the Round in 2010.

But I hope that by the time Ministers meet early next year for a stock take of our progress these ambitions will be turned into real action.

Because, if we don't make progress soon, we will miss our 2010 target and that would be a huge loss for the global economy, and crucially, for the world's poorest.

For example, Cambodian garment exporters are facing tariffs of over 30% in some markets, and West African cotton farmers are losing \$75-100 million every year because of subsidies in bigger countries.

Second, and independently of the progress of the DDA, the UK remains very strongly committed to ensuring progress on Aid for Trade; indeed the current global downturn has made it all the more important.

This is why we, in the UK have committed ourselves to spend £1bn a year for trade and growth over the coming years.

It is also why we are doing more in some critical areas- notably support for the EIF, trade facilitation and regional integration, such as the North-South Corridor.

Our third pressing crisis- climate change- also requires an appropriate trade response.

We must respect our open trading system and avoid any charge of closet protectionism.

And we must encourage technology transfer, and focus on meeting that vital Doha goal of liberalising trade so that green goods and services are accessible globally.

So I would urge members to consider creative options to help us make rapid progress on this agenda. Why not, for example, voluntary reductions on tariffs on green goods now?

The opportunities are too large and the challenges too pressing to wait.

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