

STATEMENT
DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR M.A. MARUPING
CHAIR of the IF BOARD
AT THE SIGNING CEREMONY between
the KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA
and
the EIF TRUST FUND MANAGER
3 FEBRUARY 2010
WTO, GENEVA

Your Excellency, Ambassador Hazem Karakotly of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Switzerland,

Mr. Ahmed M. Al-Ghannam, The Director General of The Saudi Export Program, the Saudi Fund for Development and delegation,

Mr. Mohamed Al Khateeb, Saudi Representative in WTO

The EIF Executive Director, Madam Tembo, and your team,

The EIF Trust Fund Manager, Represented by Mr. Bernhard Schlachter and Mr. Jairo Morales,

Our Distinguished Guests,

Let me commence by thanking you, Your Excellency and Mr. Al-Ghannam, for coming to make this signing ceremony a reality as highly valued King's messengers. Your kind and illuminating messages are fully appreciated. The formal statement by Mr. Ahmed Al-Ghannam is of high quality deserving to be put up on the EIF website for all to enjoy and learn. It shed more light on the aims and objectives as well as operations of the Saudi Fund and how the EIF initiative fits into the general scheme of things. The track record of the Fund was brought to the fore. Current efforts and the way ahead have been highlighted. Expression of confidence in the EIF is highly appreciated. We were particularly touched by the pledge to continue to assist those still striving to progress on the development journey.

On my part, it is a distinct honour, high privilege and great pleasure for me to witness the signing of the Contribution Agreement between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Enhanced Integrated Framework Trust Fund Manager. Allow me to express my sincere and profound gratitude to the Government and the people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia through you, Sir, for honouring their pledge. The Saudi authorities have that happy reputation of honouring their pledges. This EIF endeavour is no exception. This noble practice has held true and continues to hold true in all programmes selected for support in developing countries and elsewhere. It is particularly so in the case of the Least Developed Countries, where assistance is

provided for the purpose of supplementing their efforts in addressing poverty issues and human development in general.

Your Excellency, I am aware that the Saudi authorities, through the vehicle of the Saudi Fund for Development, have been and remain active players in the arena of financing development projects in developing countries. Commitment of the Saudi authorities is clearly reflected by the increased financing being provided to the countries in dire need. For example, 2008 alone saw the Saudi authorities, through the Fund, financing 16 projects in 15 countries amounting to a total amount of SR 1,168 million. The progressive increase in development effort support is a clear manifestation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's deep and sincere commitment to contribute towards human development (as defined in HDI).

It is gratifying for the Enhanced IF programme to enlist yet another new Donor. The timing of this new contribution could not be better. It is of crucial importance at this moment when much of the world is still holding its breath over the fragile and highly measured recovery signals. It is at the moment when most analysts are still wondering whether or not major economies are indeed emerging from the deep crisis in a sustainable way. It is magnanimous and exemplary to indicate to the world's poorest countries that there are still those who are ready to support them even in the midst of these difficult times in overcoming poverty by means of improved productive capacities and increased participation in trade, among others.

Other existing and potential Donors should take a leaf from the Saudi authorities and be encouraged to not only contribute but consider increasing the level of contributions, taking into account cost escalations and imminent increase in the demand for development resources from the LDCs. Needless to emphasize, contributing towards LDCs trade development is in effect investment in the future. It paves the way for trade-led economic growth, socio-economic development, resulting in increased employment rate and poverty eradication. It is a foresighted and noble deed.

Your Excellency, allow me to take a moment to update you on the developments in EIF endeavours. As of July 2009, the EIF became effectively operational, with the necessary key administration structures and instruments in place and with the EIF interim Board approval of the first two Tier 1 projects for Yemen and Sierra Leone aimed at strengthening the in-country National Implementation Arrangements. UNIDO was also accepted as one of the implementing partners and an observer on the EIF Board.

Since then, an additional eight Tier 1 projects for Malawi, Rwanda, Uganda, Cambodia, Liberia, The Gambia, Lao PDR and Lesotho have been approved. Furthermore, three Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies for Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Togo, which are to be undertaken by the World Bank through a special arrangement, have also been approved.

An additional approximately 20 Tier 1 projects are in the pipeline. A number of countries have already clearly indicated that they are ready to submit Tier 2 project proposals, that being the relatively more capital-intensive facet of the EIF.

While those looking from the outside may perceive preparatory work on the EIF to have taken too long to allow earlier take-off, to the insiders it did not take any longer than was necessary. It is a reflection of considerable amount of work that had to be done. EIF is about partnerships. To design, formulate, negotiate and put in place requisite structures and instruments that give comfort to all partners and stakeholders has been an engaging exercise. The quest for high quality and practicality that ensured a solid foundation on which to build the EIF dictated the pace.

It should be recalled at this stage that EIF activities are indeed needs-based and user-driven. LDCs needs have grown much larger in the aftermath of the global financial and economic crisis. Demand is all the more stronger and much larger, given the crisis and the growing number of LDCs opting for EIF as a vehicle towards mainstreaming trade and integrating it into the multilateral system as a means towards economic growth and socio-economic development. The basic tenets of EIF remain, namely being needs-based and user-driven, relying on working partnerships, as well as ensuring effectiveness in terms of processes, outputs, outcomes and impact.

May I, on behalf of the EIF Board (in which all the EIF partners are represented), the Executive Secretariat and the Trust Fund Manager, and on my own behalf, thank, most profoundly, the Saudi authorities and the people of Saudi Arabia, through you, Your Excellency and delegation, for the practical and tangible demonstration of the confidence in the EIF, as evidenced by this contribution. It is for us in the EIF to deliver. Be assured that the EIF is ready to meet that challenge. Thank you once again.