

# **FIRST TRADE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN AND SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRIES (ASA)**

## **MARRAKECH DECLARATION**

1. We, the Ministers in charge of trade, representing the Governments of 48 countries of Africa and South America, participating in the first Trade Ministerial Conference of African and South American countries held in Marrakech, Morocco, on June 19th, 2008,
2. Expressing our gratitude to His Majesty Mohammed VI, King of Morocco, and to the Government and the people of Morocco for having hosted this Conference, which allowed us to discuss important issues related to the development of trade relations and partnership between our two regions,
3. Reiterating the commitments of our Heads of States and Governments, contained in the Declaration and the Plan of Action of Abuja, adopted during the first Africa-South America Summit, which took place from 26 to 30 November 2006, and taking into account the conclusions of the first three coordinators meetings held respectively in Caracas, from 16 to 18 July 2007, and in Abuja, from 29 to 30 November 2007, as well as in Brasilia from 10 to 11 June 2008,
4. Aware of the challenges of globalization and of the role of trade as an engine of growth and economic expansion in our respective countries, in a context of raw materials prices surge,
5. Deeply concerned by the recent prices surge of foodstuffs, which represents a real threat to food security, stability and sustainable development, notably in our two regions,
6. Recognizing that Agriculture is one of the locomotives of the Doha Round and remains the most distorted sector to the disadvantage of developing countries, that these distortions continue to impede an adequate production response to the current global food crisis, and therefore the commitments undertaken by developed countries in cutting export and production subsidies as well as providing a new agricultural market access to developing countries should be implemented,
7. Taking into consideration the climate changes that constitute an urgent challenge for our regions and their negative impacts, such as drought and floods that aggravate the vulnerability of our countries,
8. Confirming our commitment to the multilateral trade system, as well as to the reform objectives fixed as part of the «Doha Development Agenda » through the Doha Ministerial Declaration and as confirmed in the Decision of the World Trade Organisation General Council in August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004 and in the Ministerial Declaration of Hong Kong, China in December, 2005, we are however concerned about the lack of progress in the Doha Round negotiations,
9. Calling for a fair and reasonable set of obligations for developing countries, which takes into account formula cuts and adequate flexibilities in NAMA that ensure that they retain a policy space to promote industrial development in accordance with special and differential treatment and the principle of less than full reciprocity,
10. Reaffirming our commitment to the realization of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and our commitment to implement the results of the XII<sup>th</sup> Ministerial session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development,

11. Reiterating our commitment to reinforce South-South Cooperation and to use the existing complementarities between our regions and our respective countries with a view to develop a space of solidarity, investment, sharing and exchange,
12. Agreeing, at the request of African countries, and in conformity with paragraphs 9 and 20 of the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration, to preserve the long standing preferences which those countries benefit from, while accepting to grant them a sufficiently long transition period, in the context of WTO trade negotiations, to enable them to conduct economic reforms and necessary adjustments for agricultural and non agricultural production branches,
13. Resolved to work individually and collectively towards the encouragement of active and effective participation of our countries in international trade and in the multilateral trade negotiations, in order to share benefits and to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals,
14. Reasserting the necessity to hold regular consultation with a view to harmonizing positions as far as possible on international trade, as well as on bilateral, interregional and multilateral trade issues,
15. Resolved to support and to promote mechanisms intended to increase interregional trade between Africa and South America, including preferential trade agreements between the countries of both regions,

We are committed to:

16. Contribute actively to the conclusion of the Doha Development Round as soon as possible, with a view to reaching a universal, functional, rule-based, open, non discriminating and fair multilateral trading system which encourages development,
17. Improve and harmonize our positions within the World Trade Organization on the issues that are of utmost importance to our two regions, with a view to voicing strong support for fair and equitable multilateral trading system that is able to take up the development challenges of the South,
18. Contribute to facilitate and accelerate the accession process of the developing countries to the World Trade Organization, in particular the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), without requiring the developing countries to undertake commitments inconsistent with their development levels and which go beyond the WTO rules and the commitments taken by the developing countries Members of the WTO,
19. Call for urgent operationalisation of the Aid for Trade Initiative, and invite the international community to ensure a larger coherence at the national, regional and worldwide levels concerning the Aid for Trade Initiative and to increase considerably the financial support allocated to this Aid in favour of African and South American countries to address the supply-side constraint and improve productive capacities,
20. Work towards achieving a larger coordination with the international financial institutions and regional banks of development, in order to harmonize the aid granted and to avoid overlaps,
21. Urge the international community to take into consideration the growing concerns of the African and South American countries concerning the recent increase of raw materials prices at the international level,

22. Express our solidarity with the countries of Africa and South America that are most affected by price fluctuations of foodstuffs and oil, and study the means to support this solidarity,
23. Exchange of technical expertise and transfer of technology, science, research and innovation in terms of improvement and diversification of production and processing of food products,
24. Exchange of data related to markets and commodities for a better management of prices fluctuations and following up the production, the supply and demand of such products,
25. Intensify regional economic integration efforts in order to allow the countries of both regions to take advantage of economies of scale created by broader regional markets,
26. Exchange of experiences and expertise between the two regions in terms of deepening the regional economic integration,
27. Ensure that Economic Partnership Agreements under negotiation benefit from a greater flexibility with regard to WTO rules, in such a way as to promote growth, development, regional integration and not to impede South- South Cooperation,
28. Call UNCTAD for the effective implementation of the Accra Agreement objectives, in particular the establishment of an integral and autonomous unity on commodities consistent with the spirit of the paragraph 183 of the said Agreement,
29. Further exploit the Global System of Trade Preferences among Developing Countries (GSTP), and work towards an equitable conclusion of the third round of the relevant negotiations, so as to increase trade between developing countries who are signatories of this Agreement within Africa and South America,
30. Invite our respective business communities to hold a biannual Forum in parallel with our Ministerial Conference and participate in trade fairs in the respective countries of the two regions with a view to showcasing our respective countries as attractive business destinations as well as the existing potential in both regions,
31. Create a core for a virtual business-to-business market, involving companies representing sectors of mutual interest for both regions, in order to develop strategic relationships between these companies,
32. Support efforts of the countries of both regions aiming at improving the business environment in order to attract domestic and long-term direct foreign investment, that will enhance trade and promote sustained economic growth,
33. Intensify the exchange of experience and know-how in all the fields pertaining to trade and investment, including in the fields of logistics, infrastructure and new information and communication technologies,
34. Encourage triangular cooperation, within the framework of intra African as well as Africa - South America cooperation, while recognizing the important role of developmental partners and Regional Economic Communities,
35. Develop synergies between the three existing regional financing institutions to facilitate foreign trade financing and other development projects of our two regions and to reduce our dependency and marginalization affecting our countries due to the traditional globalized capital market system which is often speculative,
36. Take into consideration that the absence of access to the ocean constitutes a serious barrier to economic growth and development, recognize the special needs of Landlocked

Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and support actions for the improvement of infrastructure, logistics, business facilitation and market access tending to their effective and sustainable economic development,

37. Support the initiative of the Kingdom of Morocco concerning the creation of a virtual knowledge-sharing platform, and to ensure the administration of this web portal by the Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) for the support granted to its development and we call for an effective participation of the African and South American regional economic organisations such as the African RECs,

38. Ensuring full implementation of the recommendations adopted in the present Declaration, by applying the Plan of Action that has just been adopted in Marrakech today,

39. Institute the organisation of the Trade Ministerial Conference of African and South American Countries, every two years alternately in Africa and in South America,

40. Entrust the Kingdom of Morocco, in its capacity as Chair of the 1<sup>st</sup> Trade Ministerial Conference of African and South American countries (ASA), to report on the Conference of Marrakech at the 2<sup>nd</sup> ASA Summit, to be held in Venezuela on November 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, 2008, and to present, in consultation with our regional coordinators, the Marrakech Declaration and the Plan of Action at the WTO and the UNCTAD, as well as at the different regional and international relevant fora, and

41. Examine progress accomplished in all fields during Trade, Investment and Tourism Working Group Meetings.

42. The delegations from Africa and South America thanked the Kingdom of Morocco for hosting the 1<sup>st</sup> Trade Ministerial Conference of ASA.

Adopted in Marrakech, June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2008