

Trade and development

Ministers and other heads of delegations continued their discussion from [the previous day](#). New speakers repeated the view that trade is a driving force for development. Several said that in order to achieve this trade barriers should be removed to allow them to export more, some including non-tariff barriers such as technical and safety standards.

Many speakers referred to duty-free, quota-free market access for least developed countries, some developed countries saying that they have already given this for 100% of products. Some higher income developing countries also said they have applied this on some products.

Some focused on agriculture and the need to remove market distortions caused by subsidies and high import duties. Some focused in particular on [cotton](#), welcoming some countries' recent announcements on improving market access to cotton and cotton products from least developed countries, but called for members to live up to their [commitments to cut distorting subsidies for cotton by more than the reductions on other agricultural products](#).

Several spoke of "marginalization" among developing and least developed countries that have not been able to benefit from the trading system. The high cost of finance needed for exporting was also an issue. Some smaller middle-income countries said they are deprived of finance because the single indicator of gross domestic product per person (per capita GDP) is used to determine whether funds are available rather than including other measures such as the human development index (HDI).

Most speakers welcomed the decisions ministers were about to take on least developed countries' issues. Again, they stressed the importance of [aid for trade](#). And several reiterated the call for the WTO's [Trade and Development Committee](#) to be strengthened and for a monitoring system to see how [special treatment provisions for developing countries](#) are being implemented.