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| **TRADE POLICY REVIEW:** GHANA  28 and 30 January 2008  Concluding remarks by the Chairperson |

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| http://www.wto.org/images/160pxls.gif | http://www.wto.org/images/300pxls.gif This third Trade Policy Review of Ghana has allowed us to significantly improve our understanding of its trade and related policies, and their development since its previous Review in 2001. Our discussions have greatly benefited from the participation of Mr. Kwaku Agyemang-Manu, Deputy-Minister of Trade, Industry, Private Sector Development, and Presidential Special Initiatives, and his delegation. Our thanks are also due to our discussant, Ambassador Arsene Balihuta, for his insightful and stimulating contribution, and the engagement of many delegations.  Members commended Ghana on its impressive economic performance over the past few years, with high real GDP growth rates, decreasing inflation, improved fiscal situation, and substantial progress in poverty reduction. The strong growth of Ghana's economy has been supported by trade liberalization through, inter alia, reduction of tariff rates and the number of bands as well as the streamlining of customs procedures. Ghana participates in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), enjoys non-reciprocal trade preferences from various trading partners, and is finalizing its negotiations on an Economic Partnership Agreement with the EC.  Members welcomed Ghana's commitment to the WTO, including the DDA negotiations, but encouraged it to increase its notifications under various WTO Agreements. They indicated that extending the scope of tariff binding commitments, reducing bound rates, and further reducing applied tariffs would contribute to better resource allocation. Concerns were raised on the application of various other duties and charges on products on which they have been bound at zero. Members noted Ghana's generally liberal investment regime, but asked for information about the few remaining restrictions. Some Members also encouraged Ghana to adopt a competition policy and to reduce the role of state-owned enterprises.  Members appreciated Ghana's policy objective of increasing its regional and global integration, and strengthening and diversifying its export base. Further information was sought on development plans for the agriculture and manufacturing sectors and the administration of the new mining regime. Some Members also requested clarification on the import restrictions maintained by Ghana, including prohibitions on SPS and TBT grounds. Other issues of interest to Members included customs procedures and valuation; currency conversion and surrender requirements; export promotion and subsidies; incentive schemes, including fuel subsidies; government procurement; protection of intellectual property rights; and services, including GATS commitments, financial services, telecoms, transport, and tourism.  Members appreciated the responses provided by the Ghanaian delegation, and look forward to receiving written answers to any outstanding questions.  In conclusion, Members congratulated Ghana on the positive economic results it has achieved during the last few years. They encouraged Ghana to pursue its reforms, including of its trade regime, and to improve its multilateral commitments on goods and services, with a view to enhancing the transparency and predictability of the regime, and adherence to WTO principles. Members could help by keeping their markets open for products and services of interest to Ghana, and by providing technical assistance. | http://www.wto.org/images/160pxls.gif |