

UNITED STATES-MERCOSUR FOUR-PLUS-ONE JOINT STATEMENT (SEPTEMBER 24, 2001)

Following the September 24 meeting, United States Trade Representative Robert B. Zoellick, Argentine Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship Adalberto Rodriguez Giavarini, Brazilian Foreign Minister Celso Lafer, Paraguayan Foreign Minister Jose Antonio Moreno Ruffinelli and Uruguayan Foreign Minister Didier Operti are pleased to release the following Joint Statement which outlines the overall results:

We, the Ministers Responsible for Trade of the United States and the Member States of Mercosur -- Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay -- met on September 24, 2001, in Washington, D.C., under the auspices of the 1991 Rose Garden Agreement. Recent events have crystallized for us the importance of a strong trade relationship among our countries in order to encourage economic growth. In this time of crisis, we recognize, as we did in 1991, the importance of promoting an open and predictable environment for trade and investment and the significant role this plays in fostering economic growth and development. We also recognize the importance the economic environment plays in the consolidation of the democratic institutions we cherish. We are determined to build on the foundations of the Rose Garden Agreement in facing the challenges ahead.

We note that in 1991 we agreed to work toward the conclusion and implementation of the Uruguay Round. Today we resolve to use the Rose Garden Agreement as a means to unite in our efforts to launch an ambitious new WTO round at the Doha Ministerial in November of this year. We pledge to work together in pursuing a market-oriented agricultural trading system and to open markets for agricultural products that are so important to our economies. We also agree to redouble our efforts to ensure the successful conclusion of the Free Trade Area of the Americas no later than January 2005.

The FTAA is a crucial part of the hemispheric effort, centered in the Summit of the Americas, to create a region of democracy, economic growth and prosperity, and the rule of law. In addition, we have decided to reinvigorate the Council on Trade and Investment established by the Rose Garden Agreement. It will carry out a work program, which will allow us to pursue our goal of free trade and in the immediate term to explore ways to contribute to economic growth and sustainability through better market access. In order to carry out a program of work in areas of mutual interest, we have established working groups in the areas of agricultural trade, industrial trade, investment development and electronic commerce.

In order to prepare for this meeting and ensure the success of subsequent meetings of the Council on Trade and Investment, we have each appointed a Four-Plus-One coordinator. We have directed our coordinators to carry out the work program we have decided upon today. To that end, we agreed that the Council on Trade and Investment will meet toward the end of the current year. At that meeting we will review progress in the WTO, coordinate our FTAA efforts in support of this crucial phase of negotiations, and agree on measures to deepen our trade relationship in specific areas and overall.

We are firmly committed to pursuing free trade through the launch of the next WTO round, the completion of the Free Trade Area of the Americas and the removal of

impediments to trade and investment flows through the work of the Council on Trade and Investment.