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Sub-Committee on Cotton

**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE ASPECTS OF THE
COTTON-RELATED DECISIONS IN THE 2004 JULY PACKAGE AND
PARAGRAPH 12 OF THE HONG KONG MINISTERIAL DECLARATION**

**ITEM 2C - COHERENCE BETWEEN TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT ASPECTS:
UPDATE ON THE DEVELOPMENT ASPECTS OF COTTON**

*Report of the 28th Round of the Director-General's
Consultative Framework Mechanism on Cotton¹
17 November 2017*

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The 28th Round of the Director-General's Consultative Framework Mechanism on Cotton (DGCFMC) was held on 17 November 2017, under the chairmanship of Deputy Director-General Ambassador Alan Wm. Wolff.

1.2 The Chairman acknowledged all participants and welcomed the opportunity of chairing meetings of the DGCFMC on behalf of the Director-General. He also noted that the development assistance aspects of cotton were a particularly positive example of WTO cooperation.

1.3 He brought to the attention of participants the revision of the provisional agenda for the DGCFMC. The agenda included a proposed new item 6 on "**Cotton Development Assistance Projects**", which had been added to the agenda following a request by the Cotton-4² (C-4), and as discussed at a Quad Plus meeting on 2 November 2017.

1.4 He stated that the proposed new agenda item 6 was in line with the WTO mandate on cotton development assistance, as contained in paragraph 10 of the Bali Ministerial Decision on Cotton³ and paragraph 11 of the Nairobi Ministerial Decision on Cotton⁴, which call for effective assistance and for least-developed countries (LDCs) to continue identifying their needs linked to cotton or related sectors, including on a regional basis. He also recalled relevant suggestions made by the C-4 and other Members, including on the need for enhanced private sector participation at DGCFMC meetings and the desirability of having well-substantiated discussions under agenda item 6.

1.5 The Chairman stressed that this new agenda item would add tangible value for beneficiaries, donors and partners of cotton development assistance projects and programmes. Indeed, beneficiaries could use the DGCFMC as a platform for presenting project proposals and testing their potential to be funded, while donors and partners could use it to discuss impacts and lessons learned from on-going and concluded cotton development assistance projects and activities.

1.6 Participants agreed to the addition of a new standing agenda item 6 on "**Cotton Development Assistance Projects**" on the agenda of DGCFMC meetings, effective from the 28th Round of the DGCFMC.

¹ This document has been prepared under the Secretariat's own responsibility and is without prejudice to the positions of Members or to their rights and obligations under the WTO.

² Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali

³ Document WT/MIN(13)/41 – WT/L/916, dated 11 December 2013.

⁴ Document WT/MIN(15)/46 – WT/L/981, dated 21 December 2015.

2 STATEMENT BY THE C4 COORDINATOR

2.1 The Ambassador of Mali, speaking on behalf of the C-4 and other cotton-producing countries, congratulated Ambassador Alan Wm. Wolff for his nomination as WTO Deputy Director-General and for his appointment as Chair of the DGCFMC on behalf of the Director-General. He also praised the WTO Secretariat for the organization of the DGCFMC as part of the WTO "cotton day", and the initiatives taken to support the development of the cotton sector in developing countries and LDCs, in Africa and elsewhere.

2.2 He reaffirmed the importance of promoting the African cotton sector, highlighting the priority of the sector and the need to have meaningful relevant discussions at the DGCFMC. He regretted the general lack of progress in the WTO agriculture negotiations, particularly in the area of domestic support for cotton. He noted that the ultimate objective of the C-4 remained the achievement of a negotiated solution with regard to the issue of domestic support for the cotton sector, in line with the July Package decision of 1 August 2004 to treat cotton "ambitiously, expeditiously and specifically" within the agriculture negotiations.

2.3 He noted that the C-4 had circulated their proposal for the negotiations on 11 October 2017.⁵ The proposal included a draft-ministerial decision setting out progressive reductions of all forms of subsidies and domestic support measures which distorted the cotton market. Negotiations and cooperation were singled out as preferred instruments within the WTO to achieve the most appropriate solution for the development of the African cotton sector. He thus recalled the commitment of the C-4 to the multilateral trading system, and the faith they had in the WTO's ability to allow better integration through global value chains. In this context, the C-4 coordinator mentioned the multidimensional integrative project titled "**Cotton Roadmap**",⁶ which was an important C-4 Ministerial outcome.

2.4 He explained that the Cotton Roadmap Project was aimed at promoting cotton-to-textile value chains, competitiveness, inclusiveness and sustainability under four main tenets: 1) quality and promotion of African cotton in the West and South with a post-harvest programme, 2) value addition to cottonseed and lint in the region, 3) promotion of investments in technology and knowledge transfer particularly on a south-south basis, and 4) reduction of costs in the African cotton value chain. The C4 countries urged technical and financial partners, both bilateral and multilateral, to support the implementation of the Cotton Roadmap Project.

2.5 He announced the organization of a high-level event on cotton during MC11 in Buenos Aires. The event would focus on cotton projects and include the launch of a joint WTO/ITC Cotton Portal, a presentation of the major pillars of the Cotton Roadmap Project, and a press conference by C-4 ministers.

2.6 Finally, the C-4 coordinator expressed gratitude to China on behalf of the C-4, for the financial support granted by China to allow the effective participation of the National Cotton Focal Points from the C-4. He noted that the contributions made by the participation of the national cotton focal points was crucial for the relevance and practical value of the discussions held at the DGCFMC.

2.7 The representative of the ACP Group recalled that at the last Round of the DGCFMC, on 24 July 2017, he had spelled out the priorities for the future development of the cotton sector in Africa. Those priorities included the sustainable and inclusive development of the cotton value chain.

2.8 He noted that the discussions held at the 23rd steering committee of the EU-Africa partnership on Cotton (COS-Coton), held in Brussels on 16 November 2017, had focused on those same priorities and had seen a presentation on a "pan-African cotton investment programme". He noted that the meeting had concluded with a broad consensus on the need to have a unifying event to strengthen the different projects and programmes in favour of the African cotton sector, with particular emphasis on the Cotton Roadmap Project promoted by the C-4. This was coherent with the ACP approach of linking up value chain development, financing, capacity building, trade, investment and climate change mitigation and adaptation. He concluded by committing to the finalization of a project proposal together with various other partners.

⁵ Document TN/AG/GEN/46- TN/AG/SCG/GEN/18 dated 11 October 2017.

⁶ Document WT/CFMC/W/72 dated 11 April 2017.

2.9 The representative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) also spoke about the pan-African cotton investment programme. He depicted the programme as an initiative of the African Union to give a broad financial basis to cotton development initiatives and projects, while promoting value chain development on the African continent.

2.10 He suggested that the project development process for the pan-African cotton investment programme was sufficiently inclusive to take into account the specific concerns of the C-4. He also expressed satisfaction with the participation of NEPAD in the 28th Round of the DGCFMC, and welcomed the DGCFMC as an initiative that enables regular discussions on cotton development assistance issues and prospects. These discussions ensured that African actors in the cotton value chain had their voice heard within the multilateral trading system.

2.11 The Chairman welcomed the statement by the Ambassador of Mali, as well as the other statements made. He stressed that the various development assistance initiatives, projects and programmes mentioned by the speakers were all encouraging activities towards the promotion of cotton value chains.

3 COTTON PRODUCTION AND TRADE TRENDS

3.1 The Chairman introduced item 3 by stressing the importance of the partnership between the WTO and the International Cotton Advisory Committee ("ICAC") for the advancement of the WTO work on cotton through the sharing of analyses and data. He referred to a recent visit he had made at the ICAC headquarters in Washington DC, and thanked ICAC for its warm welcome and availability to engage in technical discussions.

3.2 The Executive Director of the ICAC, Mr. Kai Hughes, provided information on the estimated total number of cotton farmers in Africa, which stood at around 3.5 million cultivating about 4.2 million hectares. Women were an estimated 12% of those farmers.

3.3 He underscored that most cotton produced by African countries was exported, and that if African countries started spinning their locally-produced cotton, the number of persons employed in the cotton sector would triple. He stated that African cotton production had recorded significant growth since 2011, while cotton mill use had not experienced the same growth rate. African yield had been flat since the 1990s, while during the same period world average yield had risen by 40%. He added that the average African yield was 64% lower than the world average yield, thus showing great potentials to increase productivity in Africa.

3.4 He provided updated statistics on African cotton exports, according to which the largest exporters were Burkina Faso and Mali, followed by Côte d'Ivoire, Benin, Cameroon and Chad. These countries accounted for 72% of total African exports.

3.5 He noted that African cotton was of good quality and highly recognized, for example in various Asian markets. He further noted that the costs of production associated with cotton were extremely competitive in Africa compared with the rest of the world, and suggested that, with increased productivity and reduced trade costs, Africa was ideally positioned to expand its exports to Asian markets, thus improving revenues and alleviating poverty.

3.6 He made reference to the FAO/IPPC ePhyto project and its relevance to cotton trade. ePhyto was an on-going project aimed at developing a system of harmonized electronic Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) certificates functioning on the basis of "block chain" technology. The final goal of the project was to create an ePhyto hub composed of various trading entities, so as to facilitate the exchange of SPS certifications and to harmonize the SPS certificates.

3.7 In response to various questions from the delegations of Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali and Pakistan, the representative of ICAC noted that the major challenges hindering the development of the cotton sector in Africa were under-exploited productivity potentials, insufficient mill use, and lack of coordination in cotton value chains and in the cotton sector in general. He also took note of a request by the C-4 for a presentation on the state of cotton transformation technologies in Africa and the relevant need for technology transfer.

3.8 The representative of Pakistan stated that, as the 4th largest producer of cotton in the world, cotton was the backbone of the economy in Pakistan. However, production was falling as a result of climate change, unfavourable weather conditions, and distortions in international markets. He noted the relevance of DGCFMC discussions in light of the recent challenges faced by the cotton sector in Pakistan.

3.9 The Chairman concluded discussions under this agenda item by thanking the ICAC representative. He noted that there was evidence of great needs and a potential for growth, from production to downstream uses, with the ICAC presentation highlighting both opportunities and challenges for the cotton sector in Africa.

4 DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S EVOLVING TABLE ON COTTON DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

4.1 The Chairman introduced item 4 of the agenda by recalling the circulation on 7 November 2017 of the updated version of the Evolving Table on cotton development assistance ("ET"), in document WT/CFMC/6/Rev.23.

4.2 The representative of the Secretariat (Ms Marième Fall) presented the updated version of the ET. She mentioned that the ET had been recognized by cotton industry experts as a unique transparency-enhancing tool in the world of commodities. She added that the ET had become a reference monitoring tool for cotton projects and programmes through quantitative information based on the submissions received from members and multilateral agencies.

4.3 She reported that the latest update of the ET was based on contributions received from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Japan, and the United States, as well as from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Updates had also been received by GIZ (Germany) and by the World Bank after the cut-off deadline; those updates would be reported in the next version of the ET, to be circulated in the first half of 2018.

4.4 She presented data showing the trends in cotton development assistance funding over the last four updates of the ET, i.e. from June 2016 to November 2017. The total value of committed amount for active projects stood at about 204 million dollars for part I of the ET (cotton specific), and at 3.5 billion dollars for projects in part II of the ET (agriculture wide). It also appeared from those data that, while the amount of cotton development assistance commitments in part I had remained stable, the amount of total commitments in part II had slightly decreased during the period under consideration. The ratio of total disbursements to total commitments had increased in both parts I and II of the ET.

4.5 She concluded her presentation by noting that part III of the ET, containing the contact details of the national cotton focal points in beneficiary countries, contained information for only 16 beneficiary countries. She encouraged all beneficiaries to send the relevant information to the Secretariat, in order to have that information published in the next version of the ET.

4.6 The representative of Mali thanked the Secretariat for the presentation and the donors and bilateral partners for their continued support. He also encouraged Members and multilateral agencies to further improve the disbursements to commitments ratio, and urged other beneficiary countries to provide the Secretariat with an update of the designated national cotton focal points.

4.7 The representative of Benin expressed gratitude to the Secretariat and donors for their support. He noted an increase in the number of beneficiaries in part II of the ET, from 31 to 38, against an increase in the number of projects reported in that part of only 2 projects. The Secretariat explained that the new projects included in Part II of the ET were multi-beneficiary projects, which explained the significant increase in the number of individual beneficiaries reported in part II of the latest version of the ET.

4.8 He further suggested that Members could focus their development assistance projects on trade facilitation and capacity building for cotton-producing LDCs. He also urged bilateral partners under the South-South cooperation platform of the ET, and other developing-country Members in a position to do so, to continue their development assistance programmes for the cotton sector in Benin, with a view to further combating poverty.

4.9 The Chairman thanked the representatives of the donor community who provided inputs to update the ET, and stressed the importance of transparency in the work of the WTO in general and in the DGCFMC in particular. He also restated the special importance that the Director-General attached to the WTO work on cotton.

5 SOUTH-SOUTH COTTON COOPERATION

5.1 The representative of Brazil reiterated the strong commitment of his country to provide technical assistance to cotton producers in the developing world. He made reference to various on-going projects, including a partnership between the Brazilian Cooperation Agency, the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation, and the governments of the C-4 and Togo.

5.2 He reported that the activities implemented under that partnership had contributed to the strengthening of individual skills of technicians, researchers, and cotton producers, while also including actions towards institutional capacity building. He highlighted that these actions had improved cotton production in partner countries, and reported that two new projects, already introduced at the previous round of the DGCFMC, were based on a partnership with Benin and Mali and were awaiting renewal of the umbrella project supporting their implementation. He concluded by thanking the C-4 for submitting the Cotton Roadmap Project, and noted that some of the objectives of that project were already being pursued by the C-4 and Togo project.

5.3 The representative of China stated that the partnership between China and African countries had further consolidated over recent years, with a special focus on the cotton sector. He reported that, over the last two years, China had participated in 10 technical cooperation programmes focused on various issues, including industrialization and agriculture modernization with special emphasis on the cotton sector. Examples of such programmes included training courses and the provision of agricultural machinery for cotton production in Western Africa.

5.4 He highlighted that Chinese experts were being sent to Benin to train local personnel on cotton production, with several workshops organized in the C-4 and other African countries, such as Sudan and Zambia. He added that, under the China Africa agriculture modernization plan, China had carried out agriculture-related projects in 100 African villages with a view to raising living standards.

5.5 The representative of Mali acknowledged, on behalf of the C-4, the contributions of Brazil and China. He also thanked Brazil for the successful completion of its project in Mali, which had improved cotton production and yield. He also noted that the C-4 plus Togo project mentioned by Brazil had produced positive results, especially in terms of capacity building for workers in the cotton sector. He concluded by encouraging further cooperation under the South-South platform.

5.6 The representative of Chad highlighted the fact that the Heads of State of the *Communauté Economique des Etats de l'Afrique Centrale* (CEEAC) had drawn, together with their partners, a development strategy for the cotton and textile sectors in Africa, taking into account the specific needs of each country. The objective of the strategy was to move to a more competitive and integrated sector which could produce cotton and cotton products of high quality, open trading opportunities in the international market, and also contribute to combating poverty. He underlined the importance of that cotton and textile development strategy and urged partners to support its further advancement.

5.7 The representative of Benin stressed the importance of the collaboration his country had undertaken with India, and expressed the hope that such cooperation would deepen and continue in the long term.

5.8 The Chairman thanked all the speakers and recalled that the contributions made by participants were recorded and given official recognition, for instance through the Periodic Report on Cotton Development Assistance prepared under the responsibility of the Director General.⁷

⁷ Document WT/GC/187 – WT/CFMC/DG/8 – WT/MIN(17)/5 dated 22 November 2017.

6 COTTON DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROJECTS

6.1 The Chairman introduced agenda item 6 by recalling that this new agenda item had been added to the DGCFMC agenda pursuant to a request by the C-4 and as endorsed by participants to the cotton Quad plus meeting of 2 November 2017.

6.2 The representative of Mali presented, on behalf of the C-4, the key tenets of the "Cotton Roadmap Project". The comprehensive project proposal had been developed in partnership with the International Trade Centre ("ITC"), and originally circulated in document WT/CFMC/W/72 dated 11 April 2017.

6.3 He clarified that the presentation was aimed at collecting feedback on the project potential to attract financial and technical support by the donor community, as well as on any other substantive matter related to the Cotton Roadmap Project.

6.4 He first illustrated the needs of the cotton sector that the Cotton Roadmap Project aimed at addressing. He explained that the project was of a cross-regional nature, and catered to the needs of regional cotton value chains in Africa. He indicated that issues related to productivity, infrastructure, logistics, and business climate, coupled with the lack of local transformation capacity, were amongst the main gaps targeted by the project. Ultimately, the project would help support the development of strong regional value chains based on cotton-to-textile processing and processing of cotton derivative products.

6.5 He highlighted the following expected outcomes from the implementation of the project: creation of sustainable jobs and poverty alleviation, promotion of artisanal and semi-industrial and industrial cotton processing, as well as transfer of knowledge and technology.

6.6 The representative of Mali stressed that the project would address a wide range of value added activities, building on previous achievements, and using support from previous cotton projects. These actions would help identify and promote the comparative advantage and the potential to attract investments of each of the C-4 countries. The measurable project outcomes included job creation, increases in yield per hectare, improvements in local production processing rate, and increased contribution of cotton to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the beneficiary countries.

6.7 The Chairman thanked the representative of Mali for his presentation of the Cotton Roadmap Project and recalled that the objective of the presentation was to foster discussions, particularly on the project's potential to attract funds. He further noted that the C-4 had initiated an innovative and creative approach to stimulating discussions at the DGCFMC, and encouraged other members as well as multilateral agencies to contribute to project-specific discussions. He highlighted the practical value of using the DGCFMC as a forum for informal project promotion, as well as for discussions on follow up and lessons learned from on-going and concluded projects.

6.8 The representative of Japan thanked the C-4 for the presentation and stated that he would report back to his capital with regard to the Cotton Roadmap Project, with a view to collecting detailed feedback and assessing the interest of Japan in being a partner in the project. As a preliminary feedback, the representative of Japan sought clarification as to what innovative elements had been incorporated in the Cotton Roadmap Project.

6.9 The representative of Brazil reiterated Brazil's willingness to consider the activities of the Cotton Roadmap Project that fell within the technical assistance framework of the Brazilian Cooperation Agency, and promised to report back to capital about the details of the prospective project.

6.10 The representative of Benin recommended that Members maintain a lively debate on projects and programmes, and noted that the Cotton Roadmap Project had value addition as its key objective.

6.11 The Chairman concluded discussions under this agenda item by highlighting that the interaction between donors and beneficiaries appeared to be very useful, particularly to collect additional information on projects and programmes towards a greater understanding of their

value. He encouraged participants to communicate with the Secretariat in between the Rounds of the DGCFMC about the projects that they would like to list under this agenda item, both for project promotion and for follow up purposes.

7 DOMESTIC COTTON SECTOR AND OTHER REFORMS/NATIONAL COTTON SECTOR FOCAL POINTS

7.1 The Chairman introduced agenda item 7 by noting that the Secretariat had received updates on domestic cotton sector reforms from Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali, as reflected in document WT/CFMC/21/Rev.14.

7.2 The National Cotton Focal Point of Chad explained that cotton offered special opportunities to increase agricultural productivity. He recalled that cotton provided a livelihood to more than 3 million people in Chad (25% of the population), and that it was cultivated in the most favourable economic zones of the region. Those factors had prompted the government to implement important reforms in the cotton sector.

7.3 He reported that "COTONTCHAD Société Nouvelle" had set the objective of boosting production to 300.000 tonnes of seed cotton for the season 2017/2018. Within the context of the national price fixing policy for cotton, a tripartite committee had been created by ministerial decree on 19 April 2017. The main task of this committee was to set up a new price fixing mechanism for cotton in the country.

7.4 He concluded his intervention by highlighting the importance of the WTO work on cotton and Chad's engagement in support of the initiatives taken at the WTO by the C-4. He stressed that the Cotton Roadmap Project was an important and promising project embracing the strategic vision of the C-4 to enhance productivity and create local value added.

7.5 The National Cotton Focal Point of Mali reported that cotton remained a pillar of the Malian economy. He noted that the sector was a catalyst to boost agricultural productivity and welfare for about 4 million people. He further highlighted the role of cotton as a cash crop in the country, and its contribution to food security due to the association between cotton and cereals farming. He highlighted that cotton processing provided livelihoods for over 5.000 employees of the "*Compagnie Malienne du Développement des Textiles* (CMDT)".

7.6 He explained that Mali's main objective was to revitalize the cotton sector, and that this objective was directly linked to the need for increasing and evaluating development assistance initiatives. The planned institutional reforms included a possible reorganization of the CMDT. He added that the three pillars of the national strategy to revamp the cotton sector were: 1) a privatization scheme, 2) the industrialization of transformation in the cotton value chain, and 3) the consolidation of the achievements of the national inter-professional entities such as the "*Interprofession du Coton du Mali*" (IPC) and the "*Confédération des Sociétés Coopératives des Producteurs de Coton* (C-SCPC)".

7.7 He concluded his intervention by sharing information on cotton production in the 2016/17 season, where 647.200 tonnes of seed cotton were produced, representing an increase of 26% on the previous season. Production was expected to further increase in the subsequent season, mostly due to the engagement with cotton cultivation of local smallholders. He further noted that support schemes for agricultural inputs for small producers would be pursued in the 2017/18 season. He stressed the need for multilateral actions to reduce domestic support to the cotton sector in developed countries, and thanked the development assistance partners of Mali for their efforts and continued cooperation.

7.8 The National Cotton Focal Point of Burkina Faso provided updated figures on the production of seed cotton in Burkina Faso for the 2016/17 season, which stood at 682.940 tonnes, representing an increase of 16% over the previous season. He also reported of reduced yields due to climate change and the spread of pests. He noted the forecast for a 20% increase in production for the subsequent season, mostly based on the rainfall profile of the three major cotton-producing zones in the country.

7.9 He described the national system to establish the price of seed cotton, which was based on a fluctuating 3-year average of reference prices based on the two most recently concluded seasons and the price forecast for the forthcoming season (as provided by the New York futures market). He also referred to the national system for establishing the price of agricultural inputs, which was based on a decision taken by the "*Association Interprofessionnelle du Coton du Burkina*" (AICB).

7.10 He concluded his presentation by reporting on actions taken by cotton producers to combat the spread of pests, and by sharing the forecast for the production of seed cotton for the season 2017/18, which stood at a total 731.192 tonnes, corresponding to a 7% increase over the previous season, while , on the other hand, the productivity per hectare was expected to decline by 10% in the season 2017/18.

7.11 The National Cotton Focal Point of Benin reported that the government of Benin had re-established, in April 2016, the framework agreement between the "*Association Interprofessionnelle du Coton* (AIC)" and the State of Benin, which had been suspended since 2012. He noted that this reform had allowed rebuilding trust amongst the economic operators in the cotton sector. Additional benefits of that reform included the involvement of cotton growers in the fixation of the price of seed cotton and timely payments to cotton producers, owing to the public-private management of the value chain. He highlighted that the reform had also led to an increase in the number of hectares dedicated to cotton cultivation in the season 2016/17, and that production was expected to increase from 453.012 tonnes in 2016/17 to a forecast of 550.000 tonnes for the season 2017/18.

7.12 Secondly, he announced that the *Société Nationale de Promotion Agricole* (SONAPRA) had been dissolved and replaced by 7 local entities, the "*Agences Territoriales de Développement Agricole*" (ATDA). The latter had been provided with legal personality and financial autonomy, and had as their main objective the harmonization of the value chain and territorial approaches to the cotton sector. The local entities were expected to act on issues ranging from the strengthening of the cooperation between the various cotton stakeholders to the promotion of agricultural modernization and relevant economic infrastructure.

7.13 He concluded his intervention by reporting on a third reform affecting the cotton sector: the creation by government decree, in June 2017, of the "*Fond National de Développement Agricole*" (FNDA). The FNDA was expected to start discharging its functions by the end of 2017.

7.14 The Chairman thanked the National Cotton Focal Points for their comprehensive contributions and comments, which were highly relevant to the work of the DGCFMC.

8 CONCLUSION

8.1. The Chairman concluded the meeting by reiterating the importance that the Director-General attaches to the Cotton File. He commended the C-4, the donor community as well as other beneficiaries of development assistance for their constructive role in taking forward the discussions based on the Director-General's Evolving Table.
