

International Trade

Presentation to Parliament

on

South Africa's role in the WTO

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SA's role

President Mandela provided guidance to South Africa's negotiators:

- Mandela committed SA's foreign policy on the principles of human rights, justice, respect for international law, peace, the interests of Africa, and international cooperation on economic development (*Foreign Affairs* in Dec 1993)
- At the 50th Anniversary Celebrations of the GATT he stated: "although South Africa had been a member of the GATT since its inception in 1947 when the vast majority of South Africans had no vote ... the new Democratic SA was committed to a rules based multilateral trading system that was *just*". Geneva in 1998,
- He urged South Africa's negotiators to take responsibility for the African continent "not in a spirit of paternalism or dominance but mutual cooperation and respect".

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SA's role

- Mandela's values and principles that were to guide South Africa's negotiators in the WTO since its formation in 1995.
- SA regarded itself as a developed country since the formation of the GATT in 1947 until 1994
- the new democratic government positioned itself as a developing country and was to play a leading role in the formation and rise of developing country coalitions in the WTO.

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SA's role

- South Africa helped to launch the Doha *Development* Round (November 2001)
- led the negotiations in the WTO for affordable medicines on TRIPS and Public Health together with Brazil and India and several other African countries. (2002-2003)
- helped to launch the formidable G20 group of developing countries coalition on agriculture together with Brazil and India at the CANCUN Min. Conf. (Sept 2003)
- led a coalition of developing countries on industrial tariffs that became known as the NAMA 11 (Dec 2005)
- In Bali, Indonesia, Minister Rob Davies played a key role in obtaining an agreement in the Bali Declaration that the issues of concern to the small and vulnerable countries, the LDCs, and other poor countries, would be prioritized in the post-Bali process together with the implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement.