

**Council for Trade in Services
Special Session**

**COMMUNICATION FROM AUSTRALIA, CANADA, EGYPT, THE EUROPEAN
COMMUNITIES, GUATEMALA, JAPAN, KOREA, MEXICO, NORWAY, NEW ZEALAND,
SINGAPORE, SWITZERLAND, TURKEY, THE SEPARATE CUSTOMS TERRITORY OF
TAIWAN, PENGHU, KINMEN AND MATSU, AND THE UNITED STATES**

Joint Statement on Liberalization of Construction
and Related Engineering Services

1. Construction and related engineering services represent fundamental economic activities that permeate all economic sectors and provide them with infrastructure. Construction services are closely tied with growth in other service sectors, such as tourism, retail trade, real estate, financial services, energy services and environmental services.
2. Construction services constitute one of the largest single sectors in many economies and is a strategically important industry for creating employment and sustaining growth.
3. As a percentage of GDP, the construction sector is of special importance to developing economies, and carries for them particular significance because of its role in building social and industrial infrastructure, training of local personnel, transfer of technologies and improved access to information channels.
4. Along with construction services, related engineering services also plays an important role in the development of infrastructure. Due to rapid urbanization and economic growth, many countries, particularly developing countries, are undertaking large projects to improve upon their infrastructure. Such undertakings are often accompanied by technology diffusion, which offers additional benefits to clients in the host country: new technologies used by foreign service providers in their project design and development work are often transferred to clients in the host country as part of the project.
5. A first step for countries to take advantage of the broad benefits that construction services offer to economic growth and development is to attract foreign investment in the construction services sector. Scheduling improved revised GATS offer in this sector as a whole will help to foster increased foreign investment in construction services on their territory, and we urge all WTO Members to do so.
6. In this context, it is especially important for all WTO Members to eliminate discriminatory measures against foreign service suppliers in mode 3.
7. We are encouraged in this regard by oral statements from a large number of Members of all continents and all levels of development, at the Council for Trade in Services Special Session in the February cluster, calling for ambitious offers in the construction and related engineering services sector.