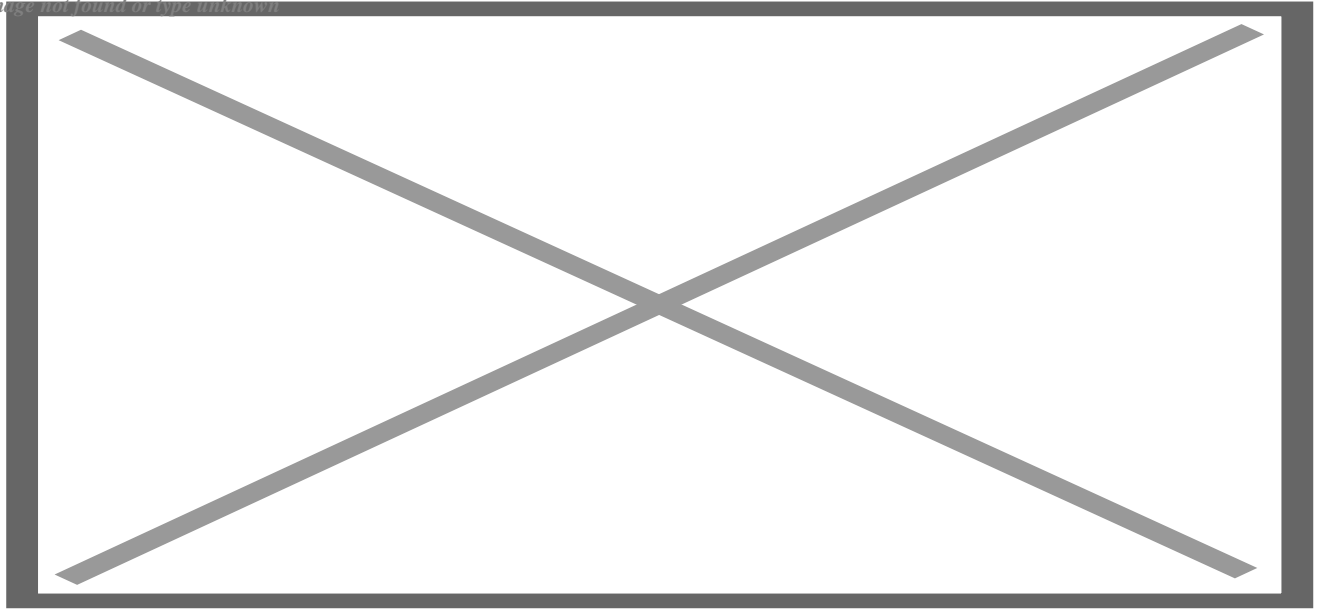


Cuba defended fair and equitable trade at WTO conference

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Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade and Investment Déborah Rivas.

Havana, June 13 (RHC)-- Cuba defended the right of countries to fair, equitable, and non-discriminatory trade during the 12th Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO), underway in Geneva.

Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade and Investment Déborah Rivas, addressing the meeting, said that the island is committed to a multilateral system that reduces existing asymmetries and promotes the sustainable development of people.

According to the ministry's Twitter account, Rivas pointed out the challenges faced by the WTO, some of them before the multidimensional crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, such as the increase and intensification of the application of unilateral and non-tariff measures.

She also mentioned the paralysis of the Doha Development Round and the blockage of the selection process for new appellate body members, which in practice causes the dispute settlement system to function as a single instance: the panel.

"The lack of political will of developed countries to resolve these issues has eroded the organization's functioning," said the Cuban vice-minister, who added that the existing mandates in the Doha Development Agenda and subsequent approved ones remain unheeded.

Deborah Rivas said that any reform of the WTO must be based on consensus, inclusion, transparency, and the effective participation of all member states. The transformation of this organization cannot accept inherited inequalities or proposals that aggravate imbalances.

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