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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE URUGUAY ROUND

Statement by Mr. A. Purcell, Representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization

I would like to inform this Committee that FAO is providing technical assistance to countries requesting it in connection with their preparations for the Uruguay Round negotiations. It should be recalled that, in November 1987, the Director-General of FAO informed the Director-General of GATT of FAO's readiness to provide substantive support to the Uruguay Round, particularly regarding agriculture, tropical products, and natural resource-based products.

In the first instance, Mr. Chairman, FAO has been providing support to the GATT Secretariat upon its request and, following the decision taken in July 1987 by the Trade Negotiations Committee, we have been attending - as Observers - the Negotiating Groups on Agriculture and on Tropical Products and thereafter, the Group on Natural Resource-Based Products. For the meetings of the Groups we have been making contributions. To facilitate the work of the Negotiating Group on Agriculture, for example, FAO provided its paper on the impact of agricultural policies of the industrialized countries on world food security, and informed the Working Group on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Regulations and Barriers regarding the Codex Alimentarius Commission's work and the International Plant Protection Convention.

In addition to providing information to the Working Group on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Regulations and Barriers, FAO has also continued its longstanding role in providing technical assistance to countries in these fields.

FAO's work in the development of the Producer Subsidy Equivalent (PSE) and the subsequent extension of this work by the OECD as a tool for the measurement of support in agriculture has also been of value in the deliberations of the Groups. Because of our traditional expertise in relation to PSEs, we have been able to respond favourably to a request from the Negotiating Group on Agriculture to cooperate with the GATT Secretariat in providing technical assistance to interested countries to estimate PSEs for their main agricultural products. We have also provided basic information directly to participating developing countries for their use in preparing for the consultations and negotiations on agriculture. Similarly

for the negotiations on tropical products and natural resource-based products, FAO has provided statistics and other information covering products of concern to these countries. This includes the provision of commodity and trade information, such as statistics on commodity trade flows. Technical assistance to the developing countries has also included assistance to the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group (ACP) countries in preparation for the Uruguay Round through participation in a workshop for Eastern African, Preferential Trade Area (PTA) and Southern African Development Conference (SADCC) countries in September 1988 in Lusaka.