

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON

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## TARIFFS AND TRADE

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### NIGERIA

Statement by H.E. Mr. E.A. Azikiwe,  
Ambassador, Permanent Representative

The Forty-Seventh Session of the GATT CONTRACTING PARTIES is taking place against the background of momentous developments in virtually all regions of the world. Some of these changes are no doubt very positive in nature and augur well for the future. But there are others which clearly point to uncertainties ahead and therefore constitute challenges in evolving a new world order which has a direct bearing on the global economy.

The challenge to the international community is to seize this opportunity to ensure an early conclusion of the Uruguay Round trade negotiations. For my delegation, the accelerated pace in the negotiations is of utmost concern to us. The intensity of the negotiations on services and other new areas is moving in a way that does not reveal corresponding progress in the area of market access.

In this connection, I would like to re-echo the popular saying that nothing is settled until everything is settled. Whatever results we achieve must be collectively defined, collectively designed and collectively defended. Nigeria is committed to playing a constructive and positive rôle as the negotiations move to the final and concluding stages, while at the same time conscious of the fact that adequate time would be needed for the evaluation of the results from the point of view of developing countries in line with the Punta del Este Declaration.

Developments in the Uruguay Round notwithstanding, trade and environment has also assumed prominence in the GATT. In the numerous consultations that took place before the convening of the Working Group, we have made our concerns known. It is not, therefore, my intention to repeat them here. However, I must hasten to reiterate that future GATT activities in the area of environment should not be used as a vehicle to erect new and disguised barriers to our trading interests. In addition, the question of environment should be addressed side-by-side with the issue of poverty and under-development as well as debt problems confronting many developing countries. The promotion of economic and social development therefore constitutes an essential factor in the protection of the environment.

Furthermore, the existing deadlock on the adoption of the draft text on Domestically Prohibited Goods (DPG) raises serious questions on our commitment and sincerity to discuss environment in the GATT. We are

disappointed that work on DPG, an area which is also environment related has been blocked, presumably to protect the interest of industry at the expense of mankind. While we are still looking forward to the adoption of the Chairman's text, Nigeria has taken supplementary measures to strengthen its domestic legislation in order to prevent and forestall illegal dumping of dangerous goods, and hazardous and toxic wastes on its territory. We are determined to ensure that this dangerous trend does not pose a severe threat to our population. We urge all contracting parties to commit themselves fully to the pursuit of environmentally- sound technology which will be available to all. We hope that next year the Chairman of the Council will continue further consultations on DPG with a view to adopting the draft text.

Finally, a strong dispute settlement mechanism would provide a stable, predictable and reinforced multilateral trading system. Therefore, in order to concretise this noble objective, it is necessary for contracting parties to respect and implement panel reports and findings. If we fail to do so, the whole basis of multilateralism would be subjected to jeopardy. We should therefore seriously address this issue with a view to overcoming the existing obstacles.