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RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE EXTERNAL TRADE AND PAYMENTS SITUATION OF LEAST-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND IN TRADE POLICY MEASURES RELATING TO THEM

Note by the Secretariat

1. This note reviews recent developments in the external trade situation of the least-developed countries and recent trade policy measures relating to them[1]. Section I contains a summary of recent economic developments, with particular emphasis on trade. Section II contains a list of measures taken recently in favour of least-developed countries outside the framework of the Uruguay Round, and unilateral trade liberalization initiatives taken since the start of the Uruguay Round. Section III summarizes recent technical cooperation activities carried out by GATT in favour of least-developed countries.

Section I: Recent developments relating to the external trade and payments situation

2. While overall real income of the least-developed countries rose an estimated 2 1/2 per cent in 1991, growth on a per capita basis remained flat for the group as a whole, continuing the pattern of the 1980s. On an individual country basis, per capita real income declined in the 1980s in

[1]Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haïti, Kiribati, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, Rwanda, Samoa, Sao Tomé and Principe, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Sudan, Togo, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Vanuatu, Yemen, Zaïre, Zambia. Statistics collected up to the end of 1991 do not include Cambodia, Madagascar, Solomon Islands, Zaïre and Zambia, which were classified as least-developed countries by the United Nations' General Assembly at its 46th Session in December 1991. The total population of least-developed countries is estimated at 500 million.

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more than half the least-developed countries, with a decline of particular severity in Sub-Saharan least-developed countries such as Sao Tomé and Principe, Niger, Guinea and Mozambique. On the other hand, important gains were made by other least-developed countries, including Maldives, Botswana, Bhutan, Chad and Cape Verde. In the course of the 1980s, output rose in almost all the least-developed countries, but population growth averaging 2 1/2 per cent eroded gains on a per capita basis in many instances. For those countries which began the decade at the subsistence level, a rising incidence of hunger and malnutrition is the main consequence of a decade of declining per capita real income.

3. The external trade situations of least-developed countries in the first half of 1991 were adversely affected by the Gulf War, which interrupted worker remittances and other commercial service exports. Higher petroleum prices also affected import expenditures of least-developed countries, with the exception of oil-exporting Yemen. The cessation of hostilities brought with it a decline in petroleum prices to pre-crisis levels, but worker remittances do not appear to have recovered to the pre-crisis level.

4. The recessionary tendencies which had emerged in North America in late 1990 spread to Western Europe and Japan in the course of 1991. Depressed demand contributed to maintaining the downward trend in prices of most primary commodities of export interest to least-developed countries (see Table 1).[2] Coffee was particularly affected by declining prices in 1991 and 1992 -- spot prices down roughly 40 per cent -- adversely affecting the export interests of Ethiopia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Burundi and Rwanda. Cotton prices also declined steeply in 1992, adversely affecting Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali and also Uganda. Prices of bananas, aluminium, cotton, ores and minerals, hides and skins were also on the decline. On the other hand, the rise in the price of tropical wood benefited Equatorial Guinea, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar.

5. For Afghanistan and Ethiopia and other least-developed countries with strong trading ties to the USSR and countries in Central Europe, adverse developments for their trade in 1991 included the official demise of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) in June 1991, the continuing transitions of the centrally planned economies towards market economies, and the dissolution of the USSR, giving rise to considerable uncertainty concerning traditional trading relationships.

6. Up-to-date data for the group of least-developed countries as a whole indicate that total merchandise exports of least-developed countries to

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[2]The importance of primary products in the exports of individual least-developed countries varies greatly; for example, less than one-third for Bangladesh and Nepal as a result of the importance of textile manufactures in exports.

OECD countries, the primary destination for hard-currency exports, fell to US$8 billion (see Table 2).[3] Sharply lower exports of fuels, largely from Yemen, more than offset a 22 per cent expansion of clothing exports, primarily from Bangladesh. Imports of least-developed countries from OECD countries also declined in 1991, falling 8 1/2 per cent to US$10 billion (see Table 3). The drop in imports is largely due to a broadly based decline in all categories of machinery and transport equipment.

7. Merchandise trade data up to the end of 1991 are currently available only for 12 least-developed countries, accounting for one-third of total trade (see Tables 4 and 5).[4] Almost all reporting countries experienced an increase in the value of total exports and/or imports. Exports of Uganda gained more than one-third in 1991, recovering some of the ground lost in the preceding year, but were still only 40 per cent of their 1980 value.[5] Nepal reported the second largest gain; one factor was sharply higher shipments of textiles to OECD destinations. After climbing steeply since 1985, total exports of Bangladesh rose slightly in 1991. While the growth of exports to OECD destinations remained buoyant (clothing, 70 per cent of the total, rose 28 per cent), shipments to other destinations apparently declined.

8. For all other least-developed countries, trade data recorded by OECD partners provide an incomplete picture of developments in 1991.[6] Declines in exports to OECD countries were widespread - two-thirds of the least-developed countries experienced lower exports to this group, many for the second consecutive year. Declines of one-third and over since 1989 were recorded for shipments from Kiribati, Vanuatu, Sao Tomé and Principe, Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda and Togo. On the other hand, increases in the value of exports to OECD countries of one-third or more between 1989 and 1991 were recorded by Maldives, Malawi, Djibouti, Nepal, Tuvalu, Bangladesh and Myanmar. On the import side, shipments of OECD countries to Benin, Comoros, Malawi and Samoa rose by over one-half since

[3] Data reported by OECD trade partners exclude Botswana and Lesotho, members of the South African Customs Union. The figures do not include the countries classified as least-developed by the United Nation's General Assembly in December 1991.

[4] In some instances, these data are not corroborated by other sources of data such as data reported by OECD trading partners.

[5] These IMF data for 1991 are not confirmed by data reported by OECD trade partners, which indicate a decline of almost 13.5 per cent.

[6] The measured importance of trade with OECD countries, relative to trade with non-OECD countries varies greatly from country to country. For example, the importance of OECD markets for the Lao People's Democratic Republic is below 20 per cent, while it is four times that figure for the United Republic of Tanzania. In some instances errors in the recording of trade explain the variation. For example, imports of OECD countries from Uganda exceed its reported value for exports by one-third.

1989, largely due to expanded shipments of machinery and transport equipment.

9. Complete data on the merchandise trade of least-developed countries with all trading partners, both OECD and non-OECD, are available only up to 1990 (see Tables 4 and 5). Except for Equatorial Guinea, all countries recorded a merchandise trade deficit in 1990. Sources of finance for the deficits included foreign exchange earnings from exports of commercial services: Lesotho (worker remittances); Maldives, Gambia and Togo (travel); Djibouti, Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania (transportation services).[7]

10. For the decade of the 1980s as a whole, several important elements emerge from the analysis of available trade data. First, two-thirds of the least-developed countries experienced export and import growth in value terms below the world average of 5 1/2 per cent. The decline in exports was of particular severity for Kiribati, Sao Tomé and Principe, and Afghanistan. On the other hand, export growth was at least double the world average for Maldives, Bhutan, Botswana, Equatorial Guinea, and the Lao People's Democratic Republic. By the end of the decade, a significant change in the structure of exports had occurred in each case, with the exception of Botswana.[8] In the case of Maldives, the shift was from exports of fresh fish in 1980 to exports of processed fish and clothing in 1990. Helped by rising demand for tropical wood products, the importance of these products rose significantly in the exports of Bhutan, Equatorial Guinea and the Lao People's Democratic Republic. Second, declining or insufficient growth in exports led to an erosion of the purchasing power of revenues from merchandise exports (in terms of the average price of machinery and transport equipment) relative to 1980 for two-thirds of the least-developed countries. Third, a large number of least-developed countries continued to experience important year-to-year fluctuations in revenues from trade throughout the decade, in many instances reflecting the influence of domestic developments such as political events, natural disasters, or the effect of adverse weather conditions on agricultural production.[9]

11. With respect to the trade and economic prospects of least-developed countries for the 1990s, the slow-growth pace of most OECD countries suggests little prospect for recovery on the demand side of most commodity

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[7]Commercial services are estimated to account for at least one-quarter of total revenues from exports of merchandise and commercial services.

[8]While the structure of exports changed in each case, the result was not a more diversified product coverage.

[9]The UNHCR estimates that almost 80 per cent of the world's 17 million refugees are located in least-developed countries, and more than two-thirds of the least-developed countries either grant sanctuary to refugees or have nationals with refugee status abroad.

markets in 1992 and the near-term.[10] Of relevance to longer-term prospects for least-developed countries is the close link between dynamic trade growth and per capita income growth in the 1980s: among the five countries with dynamic export growth, Maldives, Botswana and Bhutan reported the highest per capita income growth among least-developed countries.[11] The experience of the 1980s also indicates that the trade and economic performance of each country is related to the impact of external developments such as commodity price changes and geopolitical events such as the Gulf War, and domestic factors, including a policy environment propitious to growth.

Section II: Recent trade policy developments

(i) Recent measures in favour of the least-developed countries

12. In a communication dated 25 October 1991, Austria notified that undergarments for men, of cotton, and outer garments for ladies, of cotton had been included in the GSP tariff treatment as from 1 October 1991. These products receive at present a 50 per cent tariff cut for least-developed countries (L/4108/Add.45). In a communication dated 4 September 1992, the United States has notified that by August 1991 eighty-three items had been added to their GSP scheme and that, effective from 1 July 1992, twenty-two additional items had also been included in that scheme. These new GSP eligible items include products of export interest to a number of least-developed countries (L/7074).

13. With effect from 1 April 1992, Austria has added Cambodia, Solomon Islands, Zaïre and Zambia to the list of least-developed countries which enjoy special treatment under its GSP scheme (L/4108/Add.46). According to information available in the Secretariat, Switzerland has extended its GSP scheme for another five years. The least-developed countries can thus continue to enjoy special tariff treatment for all the products covered by the Swiss GSP scheme until 28 February 1997. With effect from 1 January 1992, Liberia has been added to the list of least-developed countries under the Swiss GSP scheme. As from

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[10] In its most recent quarterly commodity forecast the World Bank forecasts continued weakness in commodity prices in 1992, before rebounding modestly in 1993 as economic recovery takes hold in industrial countries. Thereafter fuel and non-fuel commodity price trends are expected to diverge, with fuel prices virtually doubling by the year 2000 and non-fuel commodity prices up by 40 per cent. In real terms this rise would leave non-fuel commodity prices at about two-thirds the 1982-83 recession low point.

[11] The Lao People's Democratic Republic recorded the 10th best performance for per capita income growth. Equatorial Guinea recorded the highest rate of population growth among the least-developed countries -- 5 1/2 per cent -- which more than eroded all gains on a per capita income basis from 3 per cent real income growth.

1 September 1992, Cambodia, Madagascar, Solomon Islands, Zambia and Zaïre have also been included on that list. In a communication dated 7 February 1992, Finland has notified that its GSP scheme has been extended for another ten years up to the year 2002. Moreover, Finland has indicated that all imports from the least-developed countries have been granted duty-free treatment, with the exception of a few agricultural items, and of some ready-made garments for which tariffs applied have been lowered by 50 per cent from the normal rate (L/3694/Add.22). According to information available to the Secretariat, as from 1 April 1992, Japan has included Cambodia, Solomon Islands, Madagascar and Liberia on the list of least-developed countries that enjoy special treatment under its GSP scheme. In a communication dated 22 January 1992, Norway has notified that Cambodia, Madagascar, Solomon Islands, Zaïre and Zambia have been included on the list of least-developed countries that enjoy preferential treatment for all products under HS chapters 1-97 in its GSP scheme (L/4242/Add.38). With effect from 1 January 1992, Sweden has included the Solomon Islands, Zaïre and Zambia on the list of least-developed countries that enjoy preferential treatment for all products under HS chapters 1-97 in its GSP scheme (L/7075).

14. As regards measures taken by developing countries themselves in favour of least-developed countries, Thailand has notified the establishment of a trade agreement with the Lao People's Democratic Republic on 20 June 1991, which provides for non-reciprocal preferential access to the Thai market for specified products of Lao origin (L/6947).

(ii) Other measures affecting least-developed countries

15. With effect from 1 July 1992, the United States has removed one item (steel leaf springs from certain motor vehicles) from their GSP scheme (L/7074).

(iii) Unilateral trade liberalization measures

16. Reflecting a general trend in developing countries towards outward-looking trade policies, a number of least-developed countries have adopted in recent years more liberal trade régimes as a means of promoting their economic development and growth. This trend calls for a strong positive response from their developed trading partners in the areas of trade and financing in order to ensure the success of the reforms being undertaken, taking into account the particular situation and problems of the least-developed countries.

17. The last review of unilateral trade liberalization measures adopted by least-developed countries since the beginning of the Uruguay Round was

undertaken by the Sub-Committee at its October 1991 Session.[12] An update of these unilateral trade liberalization measures is reproduced below[13]:

> Bangladesh: As part of an ongoing programme of reform introduced in 1985, the number of items subject to import prohibition was reduced. Import quotas covered 30 per cent of all imports in 1987 and this proportion was lowered by 25 per cent in 1989-90; products involved include steel, engineering products, construction materials, capital equipment, furniture, textiles, leather and jute. The maximum tariff on steel, textiles, engineering products, chemicals and electronics was reduced from 200 to 125 per cent, and the tariff régime was simplified. The import sales tax was also simplified and set at a maximum of 20 per cent (it has been eliminated for certain products).
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> Benin: On 21 July 1988, import prohibitions or quotas were lifted for most products. On 15 June 1990, import licences for products from the EEC, the ACP States, and the "franc area" countries were no longer required.
>
> Central African Republic: In the context of a programme of economic reform begun in 1986, import licensing procedures and quantitative restrictions were eliminated, and export authorization requirements replaced by a system of declarations.
>
> Madagascar: Since 1988, trade liberalization actions have included the elimination of certain quantitative restrictions and the establishment of a simplified tariff structure.
>
> Malawi: In September 1988, the Government announced the liberalization of 30 per cent of its imports. With the exception of several strategic items, all imports were liberalized at the end of 1991.
>
> Togo: As part of a reform programme initiated in 1988, import and export licensing were largely abolished and a new tariff system was put in place.

(iv) Trade policy review mechanism

18. The Council conducted the first review of the trade policies and practices of Bangladesh in June 1992 (C/RM/M/24). Bangladesh is the first least-developed country to be subject to the Trade Policy Review Mechanism.

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[12] COM.TD/LLDC/W/48.

[13] This sub-section draws on material from the 1992 Overview of Developments in International Trade and the Trading System - Annual Report by the Director-General (C/RM/OV/3/Rev.1) and the List of Liberalization Measures (MTN.GNG/MA/W/10/Rev.1).

19. Despite extreme economic and social difficulties which Bangladesh has been facing, since 1985 it has embarked on a process of reform towards an outward-oriented development strategy relying primarily on private enterprise and including: reform of import policy, particularly the lowering of tariffs, reduction of import restrictions and simplification of import procedures; a greater rôle for the market in the determination of the exchange rate; promotion of conditions favouring the expansion of non-traditional export industries; privatization of a number of State-owned industries; and, the introduction of new incentives for foreign direct investment.

20. Because of the lack of technical and marketing expertise and to the declining demand for its traditional exports which faced depressed markets and strong competition, the growth of Bangladesh exports, however, remained limited. Export earnings financed only 40 per cent of the total import bills. The trade gap had thus to be contained within the limits of foreign aid. Bangladesh continued to assist efficient import substitution in certain industries. Moreover, domestic poverty combined with a low level of foreign exchange resources placed severe constraints on potential investment.

21. Export diversification including garments, seafood and leather had complemented the traditional export base of jute and tea. However, potential for garment exports remained restricted by MFA restraints and productivity in seafood was low by international standards and that sector had been severely affected by the 1991 cyclone.

22. The Council encouraged Bangladesh to continue the process of trade policy reform. It welcomed the measures taken to reduce administrative barriers to imports and to reform the tariff structure. It recognized however that inefficiencies in resource allocation were fostered by assistance to uncompetitive firms. The Council further stressed that Bangladesh, as a least-developed country, faced severe domestic and external constraints. Improved access to markets for Bangladesh's exports, including in the context of the Uruguay Round, would support the reforms and facilitate the development of a more efficient productive economy. This should be reinforced by adequate financial and technical assistance.

(v) Balance-of-Payments Committee

23. Bangladesh is currently invoking Article XVIII:B provisions for balance-of-payments purposes. Since 1973 Bangladesh has held ten simplified consultations in the Committee. No full consultations have been held so far.

24. The latest consultations with Bangladesh under the simplified procedures for regular consultations with developing countries (BISD 20S/47) under the 1979 Declaration on Trade Measures Taken for Balance-of-Payments Purposes (BISD 26S/205) was conducted in 1992. The consultation was held in conjunction with the Trade Policy Review of Bangladesh (BOP/R/199).

Section III: GATT technical co-operation activities in favour of least-developed countries

25. GATT has accorded special attention to the technical assistance needs of least-developed countries, in particular in the context of the Uruguay Round negotiations.

26. In the second half of 1991, two tariff negotiation workshops financed by the Government of Finland were organized in Dakar and Nairobi respectively. Officials from Burkina Faso, Lesotho, Malawi, Tanzania, Togo, and Zambia participated in these tariff negotiation workshops. Also, in June 1992, a tariff negotiation workshop was organized in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) for CEAO member States. This workshop, financed by the Government of Finland, was attended *inter alia* by officials from Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania and Niger.

27. A briefing session was organized on the Uruguay Round in January 1992 in Geneva for the benefit of sixteen African countries. Delegates from the following least-developed countries participated in the briefing session: Burundi, Madagascar, Rwanda, Tanzania and Zaïre. In February 1992 another seminar on the Uruguay Round was organized in Geneva, for the benefit of eight least-developed countries, namely, Bangladesh, Benin, Burundi, Haïti, Myanmar, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda. One capital-based official from each of these eight countries participated in the seminar. The Government of Norway provided funds to cover the expenses related to their participation. Both the briefing session and the seminar were aimed at providing explanations of elements contained in the Draft Final Act embodying the results of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations submitted in December 1991 by the Chairman of the Trade Negotiations Committee at official level. The subjects discussed included: market access, agriculture, textiles and clothing, subsidies and countervailing measures, anti-dumping, safeguards, dispute settlement, trade-related investment measures, trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights including trade in counterfeit goods, and services.

28. Furthermore, the GATT Secretariat has been providing assistance to individual delegations and officials of least-developed countries in the context of their participation in the regular GATT work and in the Uruguay Round negotiations. This assistance included, among other things, provision of data and information on tariffs, non-tariff measures, and trade flows in respect of export products of least-developed countries to different markets, as well as factual background notes on specific aspects of different issues being negotiated in the Uruguay Round.

Table 1

Export Prices of Selected Primary Products, 1980-92

(Annual percentage change)

	1980-90	1989-90	1990-91	Jan-June 1991-92
A. Products with an important share in the exports of least-developed countries				
Coffee	-7.0	-11.4	-20.8	-22.7
Cotton	-1.3	8.8	-6.9	-29.7
Aluminium	-0.8	-15.9	-20.5	-10.4
Fish	1.6	9.3	3.4	-12.4*
Iron ore	0.8	12.0	9.0	-0.9
Tobacco	2.3	2.1	0.0	-0.2
Hides and skins	7.2	2.5	-13.9	-11.1
B. Other products of export interest to least-developed countries				
Bananas	3.8	-0.8	3.7	-40.4
Cocoa beans	-6.9	2.1	-6.0	-4.9
Jute	2.7	9.3		
Logs	0.7	-6.3	5.4	20.0
Oilseeds, nuts	-2.6	-11.0	0.8	4.5
Phosphate rocks	-1.4	-0.8	4.5	0.6
Rice	-4.0	-10.4	9.4	-9.3
Rubber	-4.9	-10.9	-4.4	0.0
Tea	-0.9	1.0	-9.3	-3.0

*January-March

Table 2

Exports of Least-Developed Countries to OECD countries
1980 and 1989-91

(US$ Billion and percentage)

	Value				Annual change	
	1980	1989	1990	1991	1989-90	1990-91
Total	6,115	7,726	8,250	8,030	7	-2.5
Total (excluding fuels)	5,795	6,560	6,719	6,920	2.5	3
Primary products	4,493	5,268	5,298	4,602	0.5	-13
Agricultural products	3,245	3,069	2,743	2,507	-10.5	-8.5
Food	2,383	2,325	1,954	1,862	-16	-4.5
Fuels	320	1,166	1,531	1,110	31.5	-27.5
Manufactures	1,535	2,316	2,750	2,937	18.5	7
Semi-manufactures	276	507	588	593	16	1
Textiles	334	358	460	456	28.5	-1
Clothing	84	880	1,162	1,415	32	22

Note: Based on import data c.i.f. of the OECD countries

Table 3

Imports of Least-Developed Countries from OECD countries
1980 and 1989-91

(US$ Billion and percentage)

	Value				Annual change	
	1980	1989	1990	1991	1989-90	1990-91
Total	10,546	10,340	10,920	10,013	5.5	-8.5
Primary products	2,679	2,783	2,758	2,726	-1	-1
Food	2,125	2,201	2,232	2,248	1.5	1
Manufactures	7,736	7,394	7,930	7,073	7	-11
Machinery and transport equipment	4,240	3,991	4,420	3,860	10.5	-12.5
Textiles	576	302	329	326	9	-1

Note: Based on export data f.o.b. of the OECD countries

Table 4

Merchandise Exports of Least-Developed Countries, 1980-91

(US$ Million and percentage)

	Value					Average Annual Change		
	1980	1985	1989	1990	1991	1980-90	1989-90	1990-91
Afghanistan	670	557	236	235		-10	0	
Bangladesh	793	999	1,305	1,671	1,689	8	28	1
Benin	63	123	70	95		4	36	
Bhutan	17	21	87	90		18	3	
Botswana	503	744	1,902	1,779		13	-6	
Burkina Faso	90	71	95	135		4	42	
Burundi	65	112	78	75	90	1	-4	20
Cape Verde	5	6	7	7		3	0	
Central African Rep.	116	92	134	136		2	1	
Chad	71	88	146	140		7	-4	
Comoros	9	16	18	15		5	-17	
Djibouti	12	14	25	25		8	0	
Equatorial Guinea	14	23	41	45		12	10	
Ethiopia	425	333	465	298		-3	-36	
Gambia	31	43	27	40	42	3	48	5
Guinea	390	513	645	600	610	4	-7	2
Guinea-Bissau	11	12	13	9		-2	-31	
Haïti	195	174	144	158	103	-2	10	-35
Kiribati	26	4	5	3		-19	-40	
Lao People's Dem. Rep.	31	54	80	90		11	13	
Lesotho	58	23	66	60		0	-9	
Malawi	295	249	267	417	469	4	56	12
Maldives	8	23	45	52	54	21	16	4
Mali	205	124	271	338		5	25	
Mauritania	194	374	437	514		10	18	
Mozambique	281	77	140	145		-6	4	
Myanmar	472	303	215	325	419	-4	51	29
Nepal	80	160	158	210	264	10	33	26
Niger	566	209	250	230		-9	-8	
Rwanda	72	131	88	95	93	3	8	-2
Samoa	17	15	12	9	8	-6	-25	-11
Sao Tomé and Principe	17	6	5	5		-12	0	
Sierra Leone	224	130	138	138	143	-5	0	4
Somalia	141	91	85	86		-5	1	
Sudan	543	374	672	550		0	-18	
Togo	338	190	245	255		-3	4	
Tuvalu	0	0	0	0				
Uganda	345	387	273	147	199	-8	-46	35
United Rep. of Tanzania	511	255	317	331		-4	4	
Vanuatu	34	30	22	19		-6	-14	
Yemen	800	592	720	807		0	12	
Total	8,740	7,740	9,950	10,380		2	4	

Note:

1. Other countries classified as least-developed at the UN's December 1991 General Assembly are not included.
2. Data reported by OECD partners indicate significantly higher exports for Comoros, Gambia, Haïti and Vanuatu.
3. Exports of Haïti exclude shipments from outward-processing zones, which exceed the value of other exports.

Sources: IMF, International Financial Statistics and GATT Secretariat estimates.

Table 5

Merchandise Imports of Least-Developed Countries, 1980-91

(US$ Million and percentage)

	Value					Average Annual Change		
	1980	1985	1989	1990	1991	1980-90	1989-90	1990-91
Afghanistan	841	1,194	822	936		1	14	
Bangladesh	2,599	2,772	3,648	3,598	3,401	3	-1	-5
Benin	331	298	403	524		5	30	
Bhutan	50	85	130	120		9	-8	
Botswana	691	583	1,514	1,780		10	18	
Burkina Faso	359	332	322	355		0	10	
Burundi	168	189	187	231	248	3	24	7
Cape Verde	68	84	112	135		7	21	
Central African Rep.	81	113	150	155		7	3	
Chad	74	240	450	475		20	6	
Comoros	29	36	43	44		4	2	
Djibouti	213	201	197	215		0	9	
Equatorial Guinea	55	25	41	45		-2	10	
Ethiopia	716	993	943	1,081		4	15	
Gambia	165	93	161	199	222	2	24	12
Guinea	270	448	610	664	662	9	9	0
Guinea-Bissau	55	60	70	78		4	11	
Haïti	375	442	291	296	374	-2	2	26
Kiribati	17	15	23	27		5	17	
Lao People's Dem. Rep.	29	131	230	250		24	9	
Lesotho	464	343	617	640		3	4	
Malawi	439	285	503	581	703	3	16	21
Maldives	29	53	105	129	151	16	23	17
Mali	439	299	501	480		1	-4	
Mauritania	286	234	222					
Mozambique	800	424	875	950		2	9	
Myanmar	353	283	201	270	676	-3	34	150
Nepal	342	453	580	686	756	7	18	10
Niger	594	345	370	360		-5	-3	
Rwanda	243	299	333	288	93	2	-14	-68
Samoa	62	51	67	74	99	2	10	34
Sao Tomé and Principe	19	10	18	18		-1	0	
Sierra Leone	427	151	183	149	163	-10	-19	9
Somalia	348	112	133	120		-10	-10	
Sudan	1,576	771	1,335	1,250		-2	-6	
Togo	551	288	472	500		-1	6	
Tuvalu	4	3	5	5		2	0	
Uganda	293	327	394	213	178	-3	-46	-16
United Rep. of Tanzania	1,252	1,017	1,021	1,169		-1	14	
Vanuatu	72	70	68	92	82	2	35	-11
Yemen	3,380	2,761	1,840	2,020		-5	10	
Total	19,160	16,915	20,190	21,440		1	6	

Note:

1. Other countries classified as least-developed at the UN's December 1991 General Assembly are not included.
2. Data reported by OECD partners indicate significantly higher exports to Haïti, Sao Tomé and Principe and Vanuatu.

Sources: IMF, International Financial Statistics and GATT Secretariat estimates.