

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON

TARIFFS AND TRADE

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TECHNICAL COOPERATION WITH DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN RELATION TO THE URUGUAY ROUND

Note by the Secretariat

1. The Committee on Trade and Development has periodically reviewed the GATT technical assistance programme and activities of the Secretariat. At its Seventy-First Session in October 1991, the Committee discussed the work of the Secretariat in this area on the basis of document COM.TD/W/490. This document covers technical assistance to developing countries mainly within the framework of the Uruguay Round negotiations.

2. The following paragraphs give a brief description of technical assistance activities of the Secretariat since the Seventy-First Session of the Committee.

Data, Information and Background Notes

3. Data on trade flows, tariffs and non-tariff measures needed for consultations and negotiations, were made available to delegations of developing countries. Also upon request of delegations, trade and tariff data for specific products, background information, and factual notes on typical issues in the negotiations were provided. In this process, special attention was given to the technical assistance requirements of least-developed countries. Further assistance from the Technical Cooperation Division encompassed briefing delegations and officials on developments in different areas of the negotiations with the view of helping them to participate actively in the negotiations.

Specific Technical Cooperation Missions and Seminars

4. Specific technical cooperation missions have been undertaken, since July 1992, on request by countries participating in the Uruguay Round. The basic purpose of these missions was to assist individual developing countries, as well as countries of Central and Eastern Europe, to prepare schedules of commitments in market access and services during this final phase of the Uruguay Round. Some missions were also designed to assist countries contemplating accessions to GATT.

5. The Technical Cooperation Division has, since November 1991, organized twelve country missions and seminars in different countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe. Four more seminars will be organized before the end of 1992.

Regional Workshops

6. One sub-regional workshop on tariff negotiations took place in July 1992 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. This workshop, organized with the financial assistance of the Government of Finland, was attended by member states of the Economic Community of West Africa (CEAO).

7. A general seminar on the GATT and the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations was also held in September this year in Riga, Latvia for the three Baltic States namely, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. This seminar was financed by the Government of Finland.

Briefing Sessions

8. Three-days briefing sessions were organized by the Technical Cooperation Division in January this year for African countries and in February for high-level officials from least-developed countries on latest developments in the Uruguay Round. The latter was organized with the financial assistance from the Government of Norway. Another briefing session intended for representatives from both developed and developing countries took place in October this year in Geneva. The objective of this session was to inform delegates, particularly new members of diplomatic missions, about GATT activities in general and the Uruguay Round.

Trade Policy Review Mechanism (TPRM)

9. The Technical Cooperation Division has, since the beginning of this year, provided requesting developing countries with technical assistance in the context of their preparations for the trade policy review.

Least-developed Countries

10. Ad-hoc technical assistance has been provided for least-developed countries within the context of their participation in the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations.