GATT Symposium on Trade, Environment and Sustainable Development

The Director-General, Mr. Peter Sutherland, has received the support of member countries for his initiative to host, under the GATT Secretariat's own responsibility, a public symposium on trade, environment and sustainable development. The symposium will be held on 10-11 June in the GATT building in Geneva. The aim is to examine and debate the role that trade policies can play in environmental protection and conservation. It is also to explore the proper policy responses at the multilateral level to ensure the objectives of maintaining an open trading system, promoting environmental protection and accelerating sustainable development are addressed in a coordinated and cooperative way. It will bring together experts from non-governmental organizations in the environment, development, business and consumer communities, members of the GATT Secretariat, as well as other intergovernmental organizations and government representatives who wish to participate in their personal capacities.

The format of the symposium is designed to encourage an open dialogue between all interested parties. Discussions will be centred around three broad topics: (1) the interlinkages between trade liberalization, environmental protection and sustainable development;

(2) internalization of environmental costs and the implications for trade policies and the trading system; and (3) international cooperation in the area of trade, the environment and sustainable development. Panellists from developing and developed countries will be invited to prepare papers and inform the debate. The GATT Secretariat will provide background documentation and prepare a full report on the symposium. The Secretariat has approached the Ford Foundation with a request for funding to ensure in particular the participation of representatives of non-governmental organizations from developing countries. The Centre for Applied Studies in International Negotiations is cooperating with the GATT in the organization of the symposium.

Since the symposium will be held in the GATT, the number of places is limited to approximately 200. Interested individuals and organizations who would like to participate are asked to register by sending the attached form as early as possible in order to ensure a place to:

Mrs. Gerirude Monnei

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