

**GENERAL AGREEMENT
ON TARIFFS AND TRADE**

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CONTRACTING PARTIES
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CANADA

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When the CONTRACTING PARTIES gathered in this hall a year ago at the conclusion of the Uruguay Round negotiations, we shared a sense of relief, to be sure, but also a profound sense of accomplishment. We knew that we had achieved great things.

In describing the various aspects of the negotiations we had just concluded, we, and many others, singled out the creation of the World Trade Organization as the crowning achievement of the Uruguay Round. We knew then that there was much work ahead of us before the WTO would become a reality. That has proved to be true, but we have persisted, and through the tireless efforts and good faith of all concerned, we achieved the signing of the Agreement in Marrakesh and now have arrived at yet another memorable day in the history of these negotiations.

I would like to extend my thanks and congratulations to you, to the Director-General and staff of the GATT Secretariat and to all of my colleagues for helping to make the WTO a reality. As you know, Canada was an early proponent of establishing the stronger institutional framework for the future trading system that the WTO will become, and I know that I speak for the entire Canadian team, those present and those that made earlier contributions dating back to the 1982 Ministerial Meeting in Geneva, in extolling this accomplishment.

Canada is well advanced in domestic implementation of these results. I am pleased to report that the required legislation was passed by the House of Commons last week by the wide margin of 185 to 7. I have every reason to expect that the bill will proceed through the Senate quickly and that Canada will be in a position to notify the Secretariat formally of our ratification before Christmas.

I know that there may be a temptation to think that we have finished, at least for a while, our examination of the international trading system and ways that it can be further liberalized and improved. I prefer to think that the remarkable success of the Uruguay Round, and the creation of a new framework for our work, will provide an almost irreversible impetus to engage in new work that, in some cases, had to be postponed until time became available.

I believe that we should turn our attention as soon as feasible to see how we might consolidate the gains we have made in market access in at least two ways: one could be through an acceleration in the implementation of tariff cuts and other aspects of improved market access. Canada has found, for example in the Free Trade Agreement with the United States, that, once the Agreement was actually in place, a number of industries in both countries wanted tariffs to come down in certain sectors faster than was foreseen by the negotiators; so, we agreed to do exactly that. We should explore the possibility of doing that multilaterally as quickly as feasible.

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A second way would be by building on the discussions we have already concluded on zero-for-zero tariff cuts.

We should also be looking at further disciplines in the use of export subsidies for agricultural products. Canada's position is that we should be working towards international disciplines prohibiting all use of export subsidies and we are pursuing this in various fora, such as Apec.

Another candidate for our early attention is trade and competition policy. While competition policy has been predominantly domestic in its orientation, differences between jurisdictions in its scope, coverage and enforcement may influence the cross-border flows of goods and services. At the same time, while trade agreements have focused on governmental measures affecting trade, private commercial behaviour, which extends beyond a domestic jurisdiction, remains largely unconstrained. It is conceivable that, ultimately, an agreement establishing international norms for competition policy could provide a useful approach to reforming the application of trade remedy measures.

We are well launched in our consideration of the trade/environment relationship and the Canadian delegation will continue to be active in addressing this issue to ensure that sustainable development and trade liberalization remain compatible and mutually reinforcing.

Another of the so-called "new" issues we wish to consider in this global forum is improved rules on investment, since it is clear that investment serves almost always as a catalyst for international trade.

By suggesting that there remained areas in which I believe more work could be done to our mutual benefit, in no way do I wish to underestimate the significance of what we have already achieved, and what we are celebrating today.

I look forward to the actual entry into force of the WTO and, again offer my congratulations to all.