

**GENERAL AGREEMENT
ON TARIFFS AND TRADE**

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KOREA

Statement by H.E. Mr. Seung Ho
Ambassador, Permanent Representative

When we look back on 1994, the most important accomplishment, is the adoption of the Final Act in Marrakesh last April, and the decision yesterday to set 1 January 1995 for the entry into force of the WTO Agreement. It represents a triumph of free trade over protectionism, a triumph of multilateralism over unilateralism and bilateralism. Through the establishment of the WTO, we have now institutionalized a new world trade order.

The establishment of the WTO does not, however, mean the demise of the GATT. For the GATT, it only means the coming of age. All of our achievements in the GATT system, particularly the principle of free trade will live on and have a greater meaning in the WTO.

Korea, like all of you here today, is committed to these principles. Our commitment will remain firm, as we are determined to accelerate our integration into the world economy.

At this auspicious moment, there are, unfortunately, some disturbing signs that continue to trouble us.

- Trade protectionism is still lingering in some part of the world.
- Regional trade arrangements are on the rise, but without sufficient safeguards ensuring that they will complement rather than compete with the GATT/WTO system.
- Lastly, we have a strong concern with the unilateral and arbitrary manner in which some individual countries interpret the Uruguay Round agreements.

These tendencies must be strongly resisted.

Looking ahead as we enter the first year of the WTO, I see that we still have many challenges. In the long run, we must, of course, set our sights to new and more ambitious goals. But for now we have first to consolidate what has been agreed during the Uruguay Round negotiations.

- First, what comes to my mind is the ratification by all of us of the WTO Agreement. I expect that Korea's ratification will be completed next week.
- Then we must faithfully implement the market access commitment we made both in goods and services.

- We must also strictly adhere to the new rules we agreed to, including those in the new areas.
- Any trade dispute should be brought to, and dealt with, in the WTO under the new dispute settlement procedures.
- Lastly, during the co-existence period, both the GATT and the WTO should work together to ensure the smooth transition from the old to a new system.

Our success depends on our collective efforts. It is my strong belief that all these tasks can be only accomplished if we continue to work together in the tradition of pragmatism and cooperation that has made the GATT so successful and effective.