

**GENERAL AGREEMENT  
ON TARIFFS AND TRADE**

**SR.50/ST/14  
22 December 1994  
Limited Distribution**

(94-2894)

**CONTRACTING PARTIES**  
Fiftieth Session

Original: Spanish

**PARAGUAY**

**Statement by Mr. Rigoberto Gauto**  
**Counsellor, Acting Chargé d'Affaires**

A little less than a year ago, in this same Chamber, we enthusiastically witnessed the completion of the longest and most ambitious GATT round of negotiations. As the echo of the final gavel blow of the Chairman of the Trade Negotiations Committee faded, many of us were wondering whether we would ever see the provisions of the agreements we had adopted enter into force.

It is therefore hardly surprising that, at this regular session of the GATT CONTRACTING PARTIES, our thoughts should turn instead to the forthcoming World Trade Organization.

We must acknowledge that the deep sense of purpose which that magical gavel blow aroused in us all has guided us throughout this year, in Marrakesh, in Geneva, as well as in our capitals. The constructive spirit of delegations was magnificently matched by Mr. Peter Sutherland's excellent guidance. Those of us who have seen him at work cannot but regret Mr. Sutherland's decision to leave, even though we know that there are three outstanding candidates to succeed him.

The Delegation of Paraguay also wishes to thank the chairmen of the subsidiary bodies of the Preparatory Committee, including yourself, Mr. Chairman, as well as the officers of the GATT bodies for the remarkable work performed throughout this year.

Paraguay became a member of GATT in January of this year, 20 years after having applied to join, which is quite a record. It is therefore a source of tremendous satisfaction for our delegation that Paraguay is one of the States that has already deposited the instrument of ratification of the Uruguay Round Agreements. And believe me, this was not the result of a decision lightly taken. On the contrary it stemmed from the Paraguayan Government's deep-rooted belief that the WTO and the Uruguay Round Agreements will be a valuable instrument for fostering our country's development and prosperity.

We know full well that the new Organization and the agreements that will enter into force are not a solution in themselves but rather a useful tool at the service of an organized and efficient country in which the State establishes the reference framework and basic conditions for economic activity, and has a strong entrepreneurial sector that operates on the basis of initiative and the free play of competition.

Paraguay is also counting on integration: not the integration that acts as a fortress but rather the integration that, by pooling resources, markets and efforts, turns its member countries into better players in the free market and makes them more attractive to investors. Hence Paraguay's dedication in joining MERCOSUR, along with Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay. Paraguay also hopes that other countries, such as Bolivia and Chile, will shortly join this shared endeavour.

Serious challenges still await the World Trade Organization. The dismantling of subsidization policies is one of them, as is the development of a trading system that respects the environment and

shows solidarity with the poorer countries. It must be kept clearly in mind that Part IV of the General Agreement has not been revoked.

We shall need the Secretariat's technical cooperation to assist us in grasping the complexities of the various agreements and in carrying out our obligations. We are optimistic as far as this is concerned, because we know that the WTO will inherit from GATT its efficient and hard-working staff; and we are also in a position to know that they are helpful and obliging. We hope that the necessary resources will be made available so that these qualities may be channelled into efficient cooperation with our delegations.

It is Paraguay's hope that there will be established in the WTO a dispute settlement system which will guarantee impartiality, justice and equity. We have established the legal instruments to attain this objective, but will and good faith, especially of the bigger trading partners, are also necessary. A Paraguayan statesman once said that if we cannot make the weak strong we must ensure that the strong are just. So be it.