

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

CONTRACTING PARTIES
Thirty-Eighth Session

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ASEAN ECONOMIC MINISTERS MEETING

Communication from the Philippines

The following communication dated 19 November 1982 has been received from the Permanent Representative of the Philippines, with the request that it be included among the documentation for the Ministerial meeting and circulated to contracting parties.

Pursuant to my intervention at the last Council Meeting held at the CIGG on 16 November, I have the honour to submit herewith a text regarding the last ASEAN Economic Ministers meeting in Singapore which text has a bearing on the GATT Ministerial meeting:

"1. Dispute settlement procedure: that ASEAN reaffirm the importance of improving the adjudication, more than the conciliation, process of the dispute settlement procedure;

"2. Agriculture: that ASEAN propose the launching of a round of negotiations for the liberalization of trade in agriculture which shall include tariff and non-tariff barriers. In this connection, ASEAN should support the establishment, within the GATT, of an institutional body to undertake urgent preparations for such negotiations; to examine trade problems, practices and policies affecting agriculture (such as those practised by the EEC with regard to products such as sugar and palm oil and to provide effective solutions to problems and distortions affecting competition; to improve transparency in agricultural trade and to review Article XVI dealing with agriculture;

"3. Tropical products: that ASEAN support the proposals that the terms of reference of the Committee on Trade and Development be expanded to become the permanent negotiating body to conduct continuing consultations and negotiations to facilitate the liberalization of trade in tropical products as a special and priority sector;

"4. Non-tariff measures: that ASEAN propose the following: (1) the elimination of all non-tariff measures inconsistent with the provisions of the GATT; (2) a standstill on new tariff and non-tariff barriers against export; and (3) an indication of a time-frame for the phasing out of remaining restrictions, priority being given to restrictions affecting exports of developing countries, particularly those quantitative restrictions already burdened with tariff and non-tariff measures;

"5. Export credits: that ASEAN take the position that provisions on minimum interest rates and maximum repayment terms of international undertaking on official export credits should not apply to developing countries imports of capital goods. This is designed to facilitate the expansion of these imports consistent with the trade and development needs of these countries;

"6. Structural adjustment: that ASEAN propose stricter discipline to be adopted by the GATT when restrictive measures are imposed to solve fundamental structural problems. However, in case of serious market disruptions, contracting parties could resort to safeguard measures on a temporary basis. If these temporary measures could not succeed in rectifying the matter, the party concerned should resort to structural adjustment measures and refrain from continuing the safeguard measures. In addition, ASEAN should support the creation of a Sub-Committee on Structural Adjustment under the Committee on Trade and Development for the purpose of facilitating the exchange of information and speeding up the implementation of structural adjustment measures."

I reiterate my request in that intervention that the text be included among the documentation for the Ministerial meeting and for circulation to GATT members.