

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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## Multilateral Trade Negotiations

### Trade Negotiations Committee

#### MEETING OF JULY 1975

##### Concluding Remarks by the Chairman

I will not attempt a detailed summary, because I think it would not be very useful, but rather to identify the main points which seem to me to have emerged from the discussions - points of convergence and also points of divergence. It is not surprising that there should be points of divergence, since we are only in the fifth month of a far-reaching and complex negotiation which will continue for some time to come.

First of all, the Committee has taken note of the reports by the Chairmen of the Groups on the work of the Committee's subsidiary bodies.

Next, I feel there is a shared conviction that, in the face of the current economic difficulties, it is essential to accelerate the negotiations and to redouble efforts to carry them forward.

Some representatives have expressed the view that, given the scope and complexity of the negotiations, the beginning already made can on the whole be considered as relatively satisfactory.

On the other hand some delegations, some developing countries, have expressed disappointment at what they regard as limited progress, in particular in areas of special interest to them, such as special procedures for negotiation, differential treatment, identification of areas in which differential measures for developing countries are feasible and appropriate, maintenance and improvement of the Generalized System of Preferences. Without attempting to be exhaustive, I merely mention some examples of what I have heard in this connexion. And the delegations which voiced these regrets and disappointments have emphasized that this situation should be remedied in the coming work of the Groups.

Everyone seems to agree that, while being fully aware of the feeling of frustration on the part of some that I have just mentioned, the work of the Groups should be pressed forward in the months ahead with renewed vigour.

There was also, it seems to me, broad agreement that concrete progress should be made in the Groups and Sub-Groups in the months ahead on issues that can lead to balanced and global progress, having regard to the objectives laid down in the Tokyo Declaration relating to the trade of developing countries. It was recognized that any such concrete results over the next few months could take a number of different forms.

In the progress which everyone hopes will thus be made, many delegations expect full account to be taken of their concern to see special procedures elaborated for negotiations between developing and developed countries, and for differential measures to be identified in favour of developing countries.

In addition, many delegations have stressed the need for concrete results on tropical products, and these delegations have asked that every effort be made to achieve such concrete results by the end of the year.

In addition, a number of delegations consider it both desirable and feasible to reach agreement in the months ahead on a general formula for tariff reduction, and in this respect a number of developing countries have added that such a formula should afford them the possibility of additional benefits. In this respect also, reference has been made to the provisions of the Tokyo Declaration concerning the maintenance and improvement of the Generalized System of Preferences.

A number of delegations have emphasized the need for progress in areas such as non-tariff measures, the sector approach, and safeguards in order to ensure global and balanced progress in the negotiations as a whole.

As regards agriculture, it is my feeling that the general view is that the sub-groups on grains, meat and dairy products are progressing as satisfactorily as one can reasonably hope, and everyone agrees that every effort should be made to further this progress.

On the other hand, many delegations have emphasized the need for a rapid solution of differences of opinion regarding procedure that exist as between some delegations, so that the negotiations can really get under way on agricultural products other than those at present covered in the three sub-groups.

As regards the question of supplies, security of supplies, access to supplies, several delegations have called attention to the importance they attach to these matters, while some other delegations have expressed their willingness to consider these questions in some of the groups already established; other delegations have stated that they need additional explanations on the real nature of the problems which, in their view, should be examined in relation to other elements of the negotiations. It seems to me that some explanatory and exploratory work is still needed here.

Mention has also been made on several occasions of the reference in the Tokyo Declaration, paragraph 9, to "improvements in the international framework for the conduct of world trade". It was noted that the work in some of the groups deals or could deal with certain aspects of this question, but work will be needed on other aspects of this question "in the light of progress in the negotiations" - to quote the Tokyo Declaration once more.

This is, I think, what I can say after listening to you. I have not tried to cover every point, but merely to single out, as I have already said, the points of convergence or divergence that have emerged from your discussions.

Clearly there is still a great deal to be done - which is not surprising since you are only in the initial stage of your negotiations. Equally clearly, there are some points on which special efforts will have to be made in the coming months, and I have mentioned some of these points, in particular those concerning developing countries and their requests.

It remains for me to wish you more intensive preparatory work and, as everyone undoubtedly hopes, more substantial progress in the second phase of negotiations which is to begin in September.

Lastly, I would like to ask whether we could envisage a meeting of the Trade Negotiations Committee on 9 December 1975. I say "envisage". Indeed, I believe it would be useful to fix here and now a date with reference to which the meetings of the groups and sub-groups, and your own preparatory work, could be organized as rationally as possible. It is always understood, of course, that this Committee is a standing body which can be convened as and when necessary.