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# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

Multilateral Trade Negotiations

Group "Tropical Products"

## CHAIRMAN'S SUMMING-UP AND RECORD OF DECISIONS AT MEETING OF 12-13 MAY 1977

1. The Group held its seventh meeting on 12-13 May 1977.
2. The Group invited the Secretary-General of UNCTAD or his representative to attend the meeting as an observer. It noted the communications received from the Chairmen of other Groups and Sub-Groups (MTN/TP/W/22).
3. In accordance with its agenda, the Group reviewed developments with regard to the concessions and contributions notified and their implementation, reviewed progress in the bilateral and plurilateral negotiations which had taken place since its previous meeting and reviewed the question of promoting further progress in negotiations relating to trade in tropical products having regard to the points contained in the Guidelines (MTN/TP/1) and taking into account developments in the other Groups of the TNC and their Sub-Groups.
4. It was noted that information on the implementation of concessions and contributions in the field of tropical products was contained in document MTN/TP/10. Representatives of offer-making countries informed the Group of the actions that their governments had taken leading to the implementation of their concessions and contributions. Some of these representatives referred to the important rôle played by the process of consultation in achieving improvements to their initial offers. A number of these representatives indicated that the concessions and contributions implemented represented the maximum effort their governments could make towards treating tropical products as a special and priority sector in the negotiations. This did not mean that in the context of the MTN as a whole further consideration would not be given to the possibility of taking additional action as the work proceeded in other Groups and Sub-Groups of the TNC. One representative said that his country was considering the possibility of further action on tropical products taking into account consultations which were in progress with certain requesting countries. Some delegations indicated their readiness to continue consultations on outstanding problems relating to tropical products.

5. Representatives of requesting countries, while expressing appreciation for the efforts made so far by certain offer-making countries, indicated their dissatisfaction with both the scope and coverage of the concessions and contributions which had been implemented. In the view of these countries, actions so far had fallen significantly short of the aims and objectives for tropical products contained in the Tokyo Declaration. These representatives referred specifically to what they considered to be a number of major shortcomings in the concessions and contributions. They emphasized the need for a major effort by offer-making countries to improve the existing concessions and contributions and make wide-ranging additional concessions and contributions in response to the requests submitted. In this connexion, some of these representatives drew attention to the relevant sections of the joint communiqué of the recent London economic summit meeting and hoped that the new impetus being given to the multilateral trade negotiations would be reflected in appropriate further efforts in the field of tropical products.

6. With regard to the question of contributions by developing countries, many delegations reiterated the views expressed at the previous meeting of the Group and reflected in paragraph 4 of the Chairman's Summing-Up (MTN/TP/7).

7. Representatives of requesting countries emphasized the importance they placed on the improvement and early implementation of the offer made by one major participant on a basis consistent with the provisions of paragraph 5 of the Tokyo Declaration taking into account the views expressed in the course of the meeting and the importance of securing effective benefits for all developing countries. In reiterating the position taken by his delegation at the October 1976 meeting of the Group, the representative of this country affirmed the continuing readiness of his authorities to carry on consultations with requesting countries with a view to arriving at a mutually satisfactory result.

8. The Group reviewed the question of promoting further progress in negotiations relating to trade in tropical products. The Group agreed that the process of bilateral and plurilateral consultations and negotiations should continue to take place between interested requesting and offer-making countries to this end. The Group agreed that the lists of requests and of the concessions and contributions implemented should be referred to other relevant Groups of the MTN, notably the Groups Agriculture, Tariffs and Non-Tariff Measures so that these Groups also, according to their own procedures, examine pending requests, or requests not fully met, having regard to the provisions of the Tokyo Declaration.

9. The Group at its next meeting would review the results achieved in the bilateral and plurilateral consultations as well as in the other negotiating Groups with a view to assessing, with the assistance of the secretariat, the situation and

overall progress in the field of tropical products having regard to developments in other areas of the negotiations. It would also examine further the question of the status of the m.f.n. concessions and the situation of the contributions which have been made. It expressed the hope that such consultations and negotiations would result in the implementation of the offers not so far implemented by one offer-making country, taking into account the views expressed on this subject in the Group and would review the situation in this regard. In addition, the Group would revert to points relevant to its work covered by the Guidelines (MTN/TP/1) including in particular sections 1(v) and 2(iii) of that document. At an appropriate stage and in the light of further developments, the Group would also consider the question of examining the specific problems which have affected fuller implementation and of proceeding to an evaluation of the results achieved in this sector of the negotiations.

10. The Group agreed that the date of its next meeting would be determined by the Chairman in consultation with interested delegations and the secretariat. It decided to inform the TNC at its next meeting of the situation reached in the Group Tropical Products.