

**MULTILATERAL TRADE  
NEGOTIATIONS  
THE URUGUAY ROUND**

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Group of Negotiations on Goods (GATT)

Negotiating Group on Natural  
Resource-Based Products

COMMUNICATION FROM SENEGAL, CAMEROON,  
COTE D'IVOIRE AND ZAIRE

The following communication has been received from Senegal, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire and Zaire with the request that it be circulated to members of the Negotiating Group on Natural Resource-Based Products.

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Owing to their low level of development, African countries export only a limited range of commodities based on their natural resources.

Furthermore, these products in their primary form accounted for 90 per cent of their export trade, as the statistics for 1986 show.

It follows that our countries' export earnings, and consequently their import capacity, still largely depend on the trading terms accorded to them.

For our countries, therefore, the achievement of the main objective of the Uruguay Round as set out in section A(i) of the Ministerial Declaration, namely to bring about further liberalization and expansion of world trade to the benefit of all countries, especially less-developed contracting parties, including the improvement of access to markets by the reduction and elimination of tariffs, quantitative restrictions and other non-tariff measures and obstacles, will depend on the treatment afforded to natural resource-based products, tropical products and, in general, primary products. Our countries' interest in the negotiations on these products was clearly expressed at the Punta del Este meeting and set forth in the 1986 Ministerial Declaration.

With regard more specifically to natural resource-based products<sup>1</sup>, the stated objective of the negotiations is to achieve the fullest liberalization of trade in such products, including in their processed and semi-processed forms, in particular by the elimination or reduction of tariff and non-tariff measures. This objective takes account of only some of our countries' concerns, and therefore should only be considered as the

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<sup>1</sup> i.e. fisheries and forestry products and non-ferrous metals and minerals.

minimum we expect from these negotiations on natural resource-based products.

In conformity with the adopted plan, the Negotiating Group should, during the current initial phase, determine the issues related to the negotiating objective, and work out techniques and modalities for achieving the agreed objectives.

The delegations of Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal and Zaire do not intend to prejudge the approach to be adopted for the negotiations, but declare as of now that they are in favour of whatever method is best suited both to take account of the realities of the special situation of developing countries and also to ensure additional benefits. That approach should take account of the need:

- To respect the sovereignty of every State over the natural resources present within its internationally recognized frontiers;
- to give concrete content to the principle of differential and more favourable treatment for developing countries in negotiations on natural resource-based products which, of all the negotiations, are of interest to the largest number of the most disadvantaged countries; in particular, and in accordance with the principle set out in section B(v) of the Punta del Este Declaration, developing countries shall not be expected to make contributions which are inconsistent with their individual development, financial and trade needs;
- to devise measures designed to attain stable, equitable and remunerative prices in accordance with Article XXXVI:4 of the General Agreement;
- to adopt specific measures in favour of the least developed countries, in order to facilitate the expansion of their trading possibilities, in particular through the local processing of their natural resource-based products;
- to liberalize as fully as possible the trade in natural resource-based products exported by African countries in all their forms and in particular through the elimination of customs duties and non-tariff barriers on processed and semi-processed products;
- to conclude the initial phase as rapidly as possible so as to favour a speedy conclusion to the negotiations and the immediate implementation of their results.

In the course of the discussions in the Negotiating Group on Natural Resource-Based Products, some delegations expressed the wish to expand the list of products concerned. Our countries believed that this

would be the surest way of tying up negotiations on an issue of vital importance for their full participation both in the negotiations themselves and in the mutual advantages which are supposed to flow from them. Consequently, they call on contracting parties to limit the number of products to be included in the negotiations to those studied since 1982 by the Working Party on Trade in Certain Natural Resource Products.

With regard more specifically to fish and fisheries products, the above-mentioned delegations consider that these should not be made a special case requiring a special treatment and régime in the framework of the GATT. The trade measures of relevance to the GATT which hinder trade have, on the whole, been thoroughly identified by the competent Working Party. What is now required is to negotiate their elimination or reduction, to the benefit of both exporters and importers.