

**MULTILATERAL TRADE  
NEGOTIATIONS  
THE URUGUAY ROUND**

RESTRICTED

MTN.TNC/19

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Trade Negotiations Committee

TRADE NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE

Fifteenth Meeting: 26 February 1991

1. The Trade Negotiations Committee held its fifteenth meeting, at official level, under the chairmanship of Mr. Arthur Dunkel.

2. The Chairman made the following statement:

"As GATT/AIR/3156 states, I have convened this meeting in order to report on the consultations that I have conducted in the period since the Brussels meeting of the Committee at Ministerial Level in December last year.

"My consultations have been held in accordance with the mandate given to me by Minister Gros Espiell at the end of that meeting. In his concluding statement (reproduced in the note on the meeting (MTN.TNC/18(MIN))), he said that my aim should be to achieve agreements in all areas of the negotiating programme in which differences remain outstanding. Minister Gros Espiell said that, during this phase, I might convene the TNC at any time at short notice. You received the notice calling this meeting only a few days ago and I would like to thank all of you for your understanding and cooperation. I take this as evidence of your desire to get the negotiations back on track without delay.

"The consultations which I have held since Brussels have indeed been intensive and have taken many forms: multilateral, plurilateral and bilateral; in Geneva and elsewhere. I have been in close touch with Minister Gros Espiell during this period. I have met many of you on numerous occasions. If I have not met all of you as often as I would have liked, it is only because I have found that there are not enough hours in each day and not enough days in each week for me to do so).

"This meeting is being held today because my consultations have led me to conclude that I have now at hand all the elements necessary to enable us to put the negotiations back on track. The main elements

of my proposed programme of work are now being circulated to you in document MTN.TNC/W/69. I do not intend to read out this text to you as its essence is simple. It provides for two main things:

- a basis for restarting the negotiations in all areas in which differences remain outstanding, and
- a proposed work agenda in each of the negotiating areas which could be developed in further consultations which will be started very shortly.

"There are a number of other points that I would like to make as a part of this plan.

"First, while in my mind this goes without saying, I must stress that the Punta del Este Declaration remains the basis for all our work in the Uruguay Round and that decisions taken at the Mid-Term Review, also retain their validity. This means, for instance, that the GNG, the GNS and the surveillance mechanism remain in place and retain their status.

"Second, I shall be consulting with participants not only on the proposed agenda for further work but also on the way in which that work will be organized.

"Third, all participants will be mindful of the requirement that an effective evaluation be conducted of the extent to which the objectives relating to differential and more favourable treatment for developing countries are being attained.

"Fourth, I also need to recall that at the Punta del Este meeting, which was held in September 1986, the Ministers agreed that "the multilateral trade negotiations will be concluded within four years" i.e., before the end of 1990. At the conclusion of the Brussels Ministerial Meeting all members of the TNC concurred with a proposal by Minister Gros Espiell that consultations be pursued until "the beginning of 1991". It is now clear that the expectation that the negotiations would be concluded by the beginning of 1991 has not been met. I therefore propose that the TNC agree to continue the negotiations with the aim of concluding them as soon as possible. You will note that I am not suggesting that the TNC fix a date for the conclusion of the negotiations, as experience has taught us that fixing target dates is not always helpful. In other words, we should allow the target date to emerge in the process of negotiation.

"I would like to make a number of consequential points. The Mid-Term decisions on Greater Ministerial Involvement in GATT and on Increasing the Contribution of GATT towards achieving Greater Coherence in Global Economic Policy Making are not limited in time and therefore remain unchanged by the continuation of the negotiations beyond 1990. The Standstill and Rollback commitments in the Punta del Este Declaration and the Mid-Term decisions on Improved Dispute Settlement Procedures and on the establishment of the Trade Policy Review Mechanism remain valid until the end of the negotiations.

"I would also like to point out that in the Mid-Term decisions on Agriculture and on Textiles and Clothing there are some specific references to the negotiations being concluded in 1990. I suggest that these references stand modified in accordance with the new agreement on the continuation of the negotiations."

3. The Committee agreed with the statement made. It also agreed that it should remain on call at short notice.