

**MULTILATERAL TRADE
NEGOTIATIONS
THE URUGUAY ROUND**

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Trade Negotiations Committee

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MEXICO

Statement by Mr. Herminio Blanco
Minister of International Trade

Mexico expresses its satisfaction and congratulates all of you on the finalization of these complex and ambitious negotiations; our governments have shown leadership and courage in reaching a fundamental agreement for the global economy, one which will be positive for all our countries.

Mexico participated actively in the negotiations in a constructive spirit with firm determination to contribute towards the strengthening of the global trade system. For Mexico, the most encouraging fact is that we have contributed significantly to elaborating a new, solid and permanent multilateral framework to serve as the basis for trade relations in the coming century: the World Trade Organization (WTO).

We place our hopes in the future achievements of the organization we have created today; for Mexico, this institution is an important cornerstone of the considerable efforts towards trade diversification which we have undertaken at the bilateral and regional levels. We believe in multilateral trade and we need it because it is the principal catalyst of global economic growth and is an effective method of combating persistent protectionist trends.

Mexico is an important beneficiary of these negotiations, but it has also contributed significantly to their success.

In the area of tariff negotiations, our trade partners have recognized the independent opening up of trade which we have achieved in recent years. We have totally fulfilled the commitment which we undertook at the Montreal Meeting in 1988; consequently, the reductions in our bound tariffs will not affect our present tariff level. Mexico is binding its tariff at 35 per cent - with certain exceptions, which include mutually satisfactory bilateral agreements. This means that Mexico will continue to have an open economy, but any trade partner wishing to obtain legally guaranteed access will have to grant reciprocal access.

Unfortunately, as far as trade in agricultural products is concerned, only universal tariffication has improved and there is only a preliminary and consequently incomplete solution to the problem of the reduction of internal subsidies and export subsidies. As a result of the understanding with its trade partners, Mexico will grant appropriate terms for tariffs on the most sensitive products.

We can inform the assembly that we have concluded substantive negotiations on market access, both for agricultural and non-agricultural products. We have been able to reach a successful conclusion to the negotiations with the majority of our principal trade partners and the concessions exchanged with them will be duly reflected in the relevant protocol.

As far as trade rules are concerned, there has been a significant improvement as regards anti-dumping and subsidies. Mexico plays a special rôle in the area of anti-dumping because we have well-defined and relevant export interests, but at the same time we have a legitimate need to defend our domestic producers against unfair practices by various countries, particularly since Mexico has an open economy.

With regard to subsidies, Mexico has the satisfaction of seeing the endorsement of its proposal that subsidies for the purposes of environmental protection should not be considered as unfair practices. We believe that the inclusion of this type of subsidy within the Round package will be a positive demonstration of the WTO's responsibility and commitment to the environment. It will complement the important work programme henceforward to be elaborated in order to lay down the basis for the future discussion on trade and the environment.

Concerning the settlement of disputes, we have successfully supported special and differentiated treatment for developing countries in future disputes with developed countries. It has therefore been possible to give developing countries an effective means of resolving trade disputes as an alternative to the overall system.

As regards services, the results are undoubtedly satisfactory, but we did not take advantage of the opportunity to make greater progress in sectors of prime importance worldwide. We declare our willingness to participate actively in the future negotiations which have been convened.

Mexico wishes to pay tribute to all those whose vision and perseverance have made possible this historic occasion. Special thanks go to the Deputy Directors-General, the hundreds of negotiators, the chairmen of the numerous working groups and friends in the GATT Secretariat who have devoted their utmost efforts to this vast undertaking.

I should like to express personally my admiration and gratitude for the work of the Director-General of GATT, Peter Sutherland. His intelligence, integrity and political expertise were the key to the success of the Round.

May the culmination of the Uruguay Round consolidate trends towards open trade and lead to a new climate of hope and well-being in our countries.