

**MULTILATERAL TRADE
NEGOTIATIONS
THE URUGUAY ROUND**

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CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Statement by H. E. Mr. Koffi Kouame
Ambassador, Permanent Representative

First of all, on behalf of my delegation and myself, I would like to offer my hearty congratulations on the enormous amount of dedicated, unstinting work you, the Chairmen of the various negotiating groups, have accomplished, with the assistance of the Secretariat.

Secondly, I would like to endorse the comments made by the Chairman of the group of developing countries, and also of the African countries, and applaud the success of these negotiations, even though Côte d'Ivoire and many other countries have good reason to be less than overjoyed.

After making our modest contribution to the mammoth task of restructuring international trade relations, we hoped that industrialized countries, and in particular those of the European Union, would in their offers show special concern for African countries, including Côte d'Ivoire, so as to ease and safeguard market access for our products.

We have assessed the negotiations and note the following with regard to market access: the very considerable erosion in the guaranteed margin of preference our countries enjoyed under the Lomé Convention; the continuing tariff escalation which these negotiations have for the most part failed to reduce and which remains a considerable obstacle for us in exporting processed products; the existence of non-tariff measures which replace protective tariffs and which are also real barriers; and finally, although for the first time in the history of GATT agriculture is subject to binding commitments on the part of each participant, we are still dismayed at the negative impact this reform of agricultural trade may have on the net importers of our foodstuffs.

We would like the machinery set up to remedy this problem to be more pragmatic and equitable.

Côte d'Ivoire does not want to condemn the results out of hand and in several other sectors can find much that is positive and encouraging.

One positive element of these negotiations is the improvement in the overall legal framework. The consolidation of rules, and new disciplines to strengthen them, are essential to ensure the system's credibility.

They provide the conditions needed for fair trade in a healthier environment, and give greater protection against arbitrariness for countries that are economically weak.

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The special and differential treatment negotiated over the years in almost all areas should enable our countries to participate more fully in international trade and take advantage of the provisions on technical assistance.

With regard to technical assistance, I would like to reiterate that we hope to continue receiving such assistance when the results of these negotiations are put into practice. We would like to see the resources available both increased and strengthened to cover the numerous requests we will submit.

With regard to new areas, services in particular, we welcome the framework agreement which has been prepared. The special provisions aimed at developing countries have made it widely acceptable to Côte d'Ivoire.

As regards institutional matters, Côte d'Ivoire appreciates the new provisions which will provide for an equitable and pragmatic settlement of disputes between contracting parties. They also mark the end of recourse to unilateral measures.

Very soon, my country will be making a national assessment in order to take immediate advantage both at the regional and international level of the substantial results of the negotiations.

Lastly, I wish once again to commend the good sense and effort which have helped to achieve these results.

Those of us in a position of responsibility, holding the keys to success or failure in our hands, have openly come out in favour of success. The multilateral trading system has been protected from the shock waves and dangers looming on the horizon.