

**MULTILATERAL TRADE  
NEGOTIATIONS  
THE URUGUAY ROUND**

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**UNITED STATES**

**Statement by the Hon. Michael Kantor**  
**United States Trade Representative**

It is a great honour for me to be here as President Clinton's representative for the formal signing of the Uruguay Round agreement. I am pleased that Vice President Gore will speak to us later this afternoon. The Vice President flew here from California to underscore our country's commitment to the success of the Uruguay Round.

The challenge of carrying out the new agreement and making the global trading system work is just beginning. While many people contributed to the success of the Round, I want to pay special tribute to the Director-General of the GATT, Peter Sutherland. He took the work of his predecessor, Arthur Dunkel, and with his intellect and energy, played an indispensable role in bringing the negotiations to a successful conclusion. I also wish to thank King Hassan for his gracious hospitality in hosting this event.

I came to the hard work of these negotiations long after most of you. I will always be grateful for the opportunity that the President gave me in joining you in contributing to the Round's successful conclusion. Reflecting on what we have accomplished together, I am struck by the thin line that separates success and failure.

There were many moments when the seven year effort seemed poised to fail. Commentators gave us many reasons why we would fail. They said the distance between developed and developing nations could not be bridged. They said the issues of services, investment and intellectual property were too complex. They said the end of the Cold War spurred economic competition, not cooperation. They said we could not transcend our bilateral disputes.

They were wrong. Honest discussion and tough negotiation brought us to mutual understanding. We recognized that the post-Cold War period would be characterized and must be characterized - by economic cooperation as well as economic competition. Bilateral differences would not disappear, but we refused to let them block our progress.

We succeeded because the ties that bind us together are stronger than the forces seeking to pull us apart. We are in a global economy where goods, services, and capital cross borders at dazzling speeds. The forces of globalization will not erase the sovereignty of our individual nations or our distinctive cultures, but they do require us to recognize that our prosperity is bound up together; that we increase prosperity by erasing barriers, rather than creating them, and that we need an international trading system to make that growth possible.

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The poet Yeats once wrote, "things fly apart; the centre does not hold". This time, the centre held.

President Clinton has described this juncture as "the third great moment of decision in the 20th century". After the First World War, the United States withdrew; after 1945, we chose the other path, forging international ties, and opened the door to a period of unprecedented global growth.

Today, we are at the third defining moment. The end of the Cold War presents new opportunities and new dangers, but we are confronted by the same basic choice: engagement or withdrawal? Through the Uruguay Round and the agreements we sign tomorrow, the United States remains intensely engaged and committed to the international system. As the President has said, we believe that open and competitive commerce enriches us as a nation, and the world. And we intend to compete, not retreat.

We will continue to build on the accomplishments of the Round. Twenty-one more countries seek to join us in the WTO, and we welcome the accession of those countries who are willing to maintain high standards and adhere to basic GATT principles.

We are living in a changed world; a world where the only constancy is change. With the end of the Cold War and the rise of a globalized economy, shaping the changes that result from a more interdependent world is absolutely critical to global prosperity.

I recognize that some are uncomfortable as we seek to address the environment and internationally recognized labour standards. But in this rapidly changing and increasingly interdependent world, it is beneficial - and inevitable - that we have begun to move beyond the traditional dictates of trade. It is clear that open markets and expanded trade foster growth and prosperity. Now our vision of the trading system must be dynamic and able to meet the emerging challenges to our collective global economic growth.

Increasingly, we will address issues related to each other's internal policies, such as competition policy and other domestic regulatory policies, as well as environmental protection and labour standards. In a globalized economy, how a nation addresses these issues affects its trading partners.

This does not mean nations will begin to relinquish sovereignty. We will continue to protect our sovereignty in the United States as will all of you protect yours. Eventually, we will decide to address these issues as a matter of national self-interest. We cannot avoid the realities of today's world; we must continue the momentum of the Uruguay Round by working together to raise the standard of living of people everywhere.

Today we mark an historic milestone. But our work is a work in progress. The success of the trading system depends on our ability to ensure prosperity through a rising standard of living. Successful market economies, thriving democracy, and social justice are all intertwined.

We must all remember that our work is not an academic exercise. We seek to create the conditions in which all our people have the opportunity to fulfil their individual potential and build better lives for themselves and their families.