

**MULTILATERAL TRADE
NEGOTIATIONS
THE URUGUAY ROUND**

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PARAGUAY

Statement by H.E. Mr Luis Maria Ramirez-Boettner
Minister for Foreign Affairs

It is with high hopes that we are today attending the culmination of the longest process of negotiations in world history, namely the Uruguay Round of the GATT, which commenced in Punta del Este in 1986.

This passed through successive stages and covered a varied range of subjects, for some of which solutions were found as a function of the current economic and trade situation, while others await new fora in which positive solutions can be reached.

The Republic of Paraguay, which at the end of the 1980s commenced a historical process of political democratization and far-reaching changes in its economic structure, realized the importance of the objectives set in the Uruguay Round and, in accordance with its policy of opening its trade to the rest of the world and with the philosophy of economic liberalism established by the national Government, accelerated the steps for its accession to the GATT and signed the Protocol of Accession on 1 July 1993.

In parallel, it participated in the negotiations of the Uruguay Round in the hope that at its conclusion it would benefit from wide-ranging trade, without discrimination or artificial barriers, accompanied by just measures to strengthen the open system of multilateralism established by the GATT.

At that time, together with Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay, Paraguay embarked upon the establishment of the common market of the South, Mercosur, with the firm political will of establishing in the south of the American continent a system of integration which could strengthen economic, political and social relations between its members, with the aim of creating the conditions for a better quality of life for all the inhabitants of the sub-region.

We are firmly continuing along this course, which is consistent with the globalization of the economy and the internationalization of trade, which are the dominant themes in current world relations.

The World Trade Organization takes its place in this context as the vital force for consolidating the free and plentiful trade in goods as an effective continuation of the work of the GATT. Its role is also to commence the formulation of rules governing services and aspects of intellectual property related to trade which, in today's complex web of interdependence, are not only confined to the limited context of nations and their legal rules, but are also spread throughout the world economy.

Above and beyond the congratulations in which we share for the achievement of its objectives, we are now faced with the difficult task of implementing the agreements which have been concluded.

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The product of such patient negotiation and agreement now has to be translated into the effective establishment of a new order permitting equal access to trading opportunities for all States, without distinction on the grounds of their size, politics or economy.

At the conclusion of the Uruguay Round of negotiations, no nation can boast of its achievements or claim it has obtained all that it sought. However, we can say that we have contributed to the successful emergence of this new Organization.

It is for this reason that, in the same way that in the past we called for substantial concessions and flexibility from our principal partners in the negotiation of rules, we will now require that everybody, without any distinction, and especially the most developed countries, show their capacity for leadership and set an example by their observance of the obligations which they have undertaken.

The World Trade Organization will be the forum in which we will express our common concerns and will also be the sounding board that will amplify the voice of those countries which are making immense efforts to achieve a better quality of growth for their peoples, and whose needs have gone unheard and been passed over for many years.

Paraguay pays tribute to Mr. Arthur Dunkel, who formulated the first outline of the Final Act, and congratulates Mr. Peter Sutherland, who led the Trade Negotiations Committee with great political skill, bringing together interests which were at times contrasted.

The Round which is being concluded today has had its strongest supporter in the fraternal Government of the Republic of Uruguay and its most balanced helmsman in the Uruguayan Ministry for Foreign Affairs, for which we express our warmest congratulations, which we convey personally to the excellent Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Abreu, who has guided this process with admirable efficiency since his appointment, converting what often appeared to be a utopia into a tangible reality.

In extending its congratulations to all the delegations whose efforts over so many years contributed to the welcome conclusion of these complex and ambitious negotiations, the Republic of Paraguay undertakes to work for the implementation of the agreements reached in this Round, and to deal carefully and practically with the new subjects which now confront us.

Finally, our sincere gratitude and warmest congratulations go to His Majesty King Hassan II, His Royal Highness the Crown Prince Sidi Mohamed, the Government and people of Morocco, for their generous hospitality and the excellent organization of the Conference. We wish the Moroccan people prosperity and happiness and we wish Your Majesty personal good fortune.