

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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Textiles Committee

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## ARRANGEMENT REGARDING INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN TEXTILES

### Statement by the Representative of Colombia on behalf of Developing Exporting Countries on 20 July 1981

1. We, the group of developing exporting countries members of the MFA, had come to this session of the Textiles Committee fully prepared to participate in substantive and detailed negotiations. To this end, we succeeded in co-ordinating a common position amongst ourselves. On this basis, we have also tabled concrete texts of specific proposals as our contribution to the task of finding equitable solutions in this critical area.
2. We had hoped that the developed importing countries would approach this meeting in the same spirit of engaging in substantive work. We note with deep disappointment and concern that none of this has happened.
3. As I have stated, Mr. Chairman, we have once again heard concepts like reduced growth, growth tied to consumption, globalization, cumulative market disruption, arbitrary standards of differentiation among developing countries, subjective and therefore unacceptable parameters of market disruption and other ideas. We have again been subjected to pleas of "industry in crisis". We continue to find these ideas unacceptable and our views and arguments regarding these concepts are already recorded in the minutes of earlier meetings. In this meeting again, individual developing country delegations have effectively refuted the arguments put forward by the developed countries.
4. Throughout the session we have heard broad generalized statements from the importing countries, along the same routine pattern of earlier meetings. Most of the points, made on earlier occasions, have once again been repeated without considering the fact that the developing exporting countries, both collectively and individually, have exposed the lack of legal basis and the inconsistency of these points with the objectives and several articles of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, which is the necessary basis of the Multifibre Agreement.

5. I might only add that we are totally against a system of trade based on discrimination between sources of supply from developed and developing countries. We want sincere discharge of obligations by developed countries which they have not done so far. We want effective surveillance, objective criteria and a specific and transparent set of operational disciplines. This is the spirit behind our proposals. This is why we, as a group, are convinced that the continuation of the provisions of reasonable departures cannot be contemplated in any form or shape, whether explicitly or by implication. In order to facilitate the negotiating process, Mr. Chairman, we must also emphasize that proposals to be presented should not, neither in their content nor in their intent, go beyond the framework of the MFA.

6. From the developments which took place in this meeting we conclude that there is a deliberate intent on the side of some developed countries to retard to the extent possible the beginning of concrete negotiations. We cannot agree with such behaviour because its objective is to create uncertainty and tumult in the conduct of negotiations. We believe we have a right to know when negotiations will commence as well as when we intend to come out with a mutually acceptable arrangement. To expedite work, we would recommend that the negotiations commence as soon as possible on the basis of our texts.

7. The Community statement of Tuesday, 14 July, referred to the so-called essential link between the conclusion of satisfactory bilateral agreements and renewal of the MFA. This was repeated by the Community representative in his further statement on Thursday in a more definitive language. These statements betray an attempt to downgrade the primacy of the Multilateral Instrument and to escape its agreed disciplines. The developing countries deplore and reject the approach. There is no question of untimely consideration of bilateral agreements until the multilateral framework for such agreements has been finalized.

8. We were very disappointed to hear the second statement by the representative of the EEC, made Thursday afternoon, which totally ignored the valid criticisms made by developing exporting participants of the first statement by the EEC, made last Tuesday. Three new concepts were mentioned in this second statement, which we were told are being discussed in Brussels. These were overall reduction in base levels, negative development rates and waiving of flexibility in case of economic recession. I must state that we regard these three concepts as being totally incompatible with both the MFA and the GATT, in letter as well as in spirit. These elements are not negotiable as far as we are concerned.

9. I have made this statement with the intention of clarifying issues once more before we commence actual negotiations. There have been too many delays already. We hope our next session will be more meaningful and that the participants will come with specific suggestions and proposals backed with the mandate to find equitable solutions.

10. We would like to express our appreciation for the support expressed for our proposals by the delegations of Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia. With regard to the specific proposals made by the delegation of Hungary, we will be considering them in depth.

11. We want again to welcome the presence of the delegation of the People's Republic of China as an observer in this Committee and we also want to express our deep appreciation for their support.