

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

MIN.DEC/Chair
20 September 1986

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN (AND ADOPTION OF THE MINISTERIAL DECLARATION)

Before proposing adoption of the Ministerial Declaration on the Uruguay Round, the CHAIRMAN noted that the purpose of the Declaration was to launch multilateral trade negotiations on goods and services. This involved taking three decisions: the first would be to adopt, as the CONTRACTING PARTIES, Part I of the Declaration, relating to negotiations on trade in goods; the second would be to adopt Part II, on trade in services, as representatives of Governments meeting on the occasion of the Special Session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES at Punta del Este; thirdly, again as representatives of Governments meeting on the occasion of the Special Session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES at Punta del Este, to adopt the Declaration as a whole.

He then made the following specific points:

Representatives of certain governments had expressed concern regarding a number of problems relating, in particular, to commodities, natural resource-based products and tropical products. Those governments were concerned that solutions to their problems be found and implemented quickly. Specific proposals had been put forward by certain African governments in MIN(86)/W/18. While he was sure that this conference attached great importance to those concerns, it had not been possible to complete consideration of the proposals at the conference. It had, therefore, been agreed that the proposals would be considered by the Trade Negotiations Committee foreseen in the Declaration.

In order to participate fully in the negotiations, developing countries would require technical support. There was agreement that technical support by the Secretariat, adequately strengthened, should be available to developing countries participating in the negotiations.

Some governments had expressed concern over trade measures applied for non-economic reasons.

He then summarized discussions that had taken place on the objectives of the negotiations:

- There had been a proposal to include, among the objectives of the negotiations, that of redressing growing disequilibria in world trade and of achieving, in the spirit of the Preamble to the General Agreement, a greater mutuality of interests.

- However, it had been represented that the foregoing proposal might lead to a trading system incompatible with the basic objectives and principles of GATT, the guarantor of the open and non-discriminatory trading system.
- Nevertheless, it was common ground that growing disequilibria in world trade constituted a serious problem and would need to be tackled by the countries concerned by various policy means including macro-economic policy, exchange rates, structural reform and trade policy.
- It was furthermore agreed that in the negotiations every contracting party should make genuine efforts to ensure mutual advantages and increased benefits to all participants, in accordance with the principles of the GATT.

Some proposals had been received regarding the setting up of negotiating groups for the negotiations. These proposals would be formally circulated after the Session.

He noted that there were certain issues raised by delegations on which a consensus to negotiate could not be reached at this time. These issues included the export of hazardous substances, commodity arrangements, restrictive business practices and workers' rights.

He then clarified that it was understood that paragraph F(b) was interpreted as meaning that (a) all participants in the multilateral trade negotiations have the right to participate in all negotiations on all issues and that (b) non-contracting parties shall only be precluded from participation in decisions of contracting parties relating to the results of these negotiations.

The conference had noted requests by certain governments, not at present covered by the provisions in the Declaration on participation, to take part in the multilateral trade negotiations. The Director-General was authorized, upon request by such governments, to keep them informed of progress in the negotiations.

No delegation present would see in the Declaration all the points that it wished to be included when this meeting had opened. Many of the specific concerns of delegations would have to be pursued in the negotiations themselves, and this was as it should be.

The CONTRACTING PARTIES adopted Part I of the Declaration.

Delegations made statements.*

* Reflected in the Summary Records.

The CHAIRMAN then addressed participants as representatives of Governments meeting on the occasion of the Special Session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES at Punta del Este.

He stated that a number of the agreed points that he had read out before the adoption of Part I of the Declaration also applied to Part II.

The representatives of Governments meeting on the occasion of the Special Session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES at Punta del Este adopted Part II of the Declaration.

These representatives then adopted the Declaration as a whole as a single political undertaking launching the Uruguay Round.

Delegations made statements.*

* Reflected in the Summary Records.