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Forty-Third Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FIFTH MEETING

Held in the International Conference Centre, Geneva
on Thursday, 3 December 1987, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Mansur Ahmad (Pakistan)

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Report of the Council (L/6267) (continued)

Point 20. Recourse to Articles XXII and XXIII (continued)

Sub-point 20(b)(i). European Economic Community - Enlargement of the Community

Mr. Beck (European Communities) said that the consultations referred to by the Chairman of the Council at its meeting on 7 October had led to a satisfactory conclusion of the Article XXIV:6 negotiations between the Community and Argentina, and that the difficulties which had given rise to Argentina's concerns had been resolved.

Mr. Tettamanti (Argentina) said that his delegation was pleased with the satisfactory conclusion of these negotiations and consequently saw no reason to keep this matter on the Council's agenda.

Sub-point 20(b)(ii). European Economic Community - Third-Country Meat Directive

Mr. Samuels (United States) said that his Government had twice requested establishment of a panel under Article XXIII:2 in this matter, and twice had been refused. For the third time, the United States requested that such a panel be established. As previously explained, his delegation believed that the Third-Country Meat Directive was in contravention of Article III:4 and nullified or impaired the rights of the United States under the General Agreement. Prior to requesting this panel, the United States had had bilateral consultations with the Community on this point; these discussions had not led to a satisfactory adjustment. The Community had stated in October that it would not consent to the establishment of a panel because further consultations were appropriate. The United States had acceded to this demand, and another round of

consultations under Article XXIII:1 had been held on 5 November; these had been unsuccessful. The Community had then stated in November that it would not consent to set up a panel because the time was not "ripe". He said that the US request had indeed been ripe in October, and he hoped that the Community would not further damage the GATT process by continuing to block the establishment of a panel. The United States again requested establishment of a panel under Article XXIII:2 and also renewed its request that the Community delay implementation of the Directive pending the outcome of the panel's work.

Mr. Borch (European Communities) said that the Community had already accepted the principle of the establishment of a panel at the 10-11 November Council meeting. At that time it believed, and had said, that the possibility of conciliation still offered possibilities for settling the differences which the Community had with the United States. In the absence of sufficient progress in bilateral consultations, the Community now accepted that a panel should be established.

Mr. Gagnon (Canada), Mr. Thomas (Australia), Mr. Fortune (New Zealand), Mr. Santamanti (Argentina) and Mr. Lacarte (Uruguay) welcomed the fact that it had been agreed to establish a panel and reserved their respective delegation's rights to make a submission to it.

THE CONCERNING PARTIES agreed to establish a panel and authorized the Panel to draw up the terms of reference and to designate the Chairman and members of the Panel in consultation with the parties concerned.

Sub-point 2011(iv). Japan - Customs duties, taxes and labelling practices on imported wines and alcoholic beverages

Mr. Borch (European Communities) drew attention to the Panel's recommendation in its report (L/6216) which had been adopted by the Council at its 10-11 November meeting. The Community expected Japan, within a reasonable time period, and certainly in the framework of the budget for 1980-1981, to follow up on the Panel's recommendation and to bring its laws on alcoholic beverages into conformity with the provisions of Article 24. The Community also expected Japan to inform the Council in this regard.

Mr. Gagnon (United States) expressed his Government's continuing interest in the measures taken by Japan to comply with the Panel's recommendations. Although the United States had not chosen to join the Community as a complaining party, his delegation had participated actively in the Panel's examination through a submission addressing the legal issues. The US Government and exporters looked forward to action by Japan to eliminate fully the discrimination found by the Panel.

Mr. Hatake (Japan) said that his Government, under the new Cabinet, was presently considering how Japan's liquor tax system could be reformed. In considering this reform, the Government would make every effort so that under various constraints, appropriate steps would be taken, bearing in

mind the Panel's recommendation. Since the Panel report had been adopted only three weeks earlier, Japan was not ready to make any further commitments at the present stage.

Sub-point 20(e)(i). United States - Customs user fee

Mr. Weekes (Canada) expressed surprise that the report of this Panel had not been introduced at this Session like the report of the Panel on Canadian measures on exports of unprocessed salmon and herring (SR.43/4, page 16). The Panel on the US customs user fee had been constituted and had completed its work in 1987. The Panel had met with the parties on 3 June, 7 July and 14 October and had submitted its report to the parties on 17 November; that report had been circulated in L/6264 on 25 November. The Panel's report was well-reasoned and clear; he urged the United States to consider its prompt adoption by the Council and looked forward to a speedy implementation of the findings.

Mr. Beck (European Communities) said that the Community fully shared Canada's sentiment and also regretted that the Panel's report had not been introduced at the present meeting. The Panel had conducted its enquiry and had submitted its report, recommendations and conclusions in what the Community believed to be a commendable manner. The Community supported the adoption of the report at the present Session.

Mr. Samuel's (United States) said that his delegation had not planned to comment on this matter at the present Session. Although the report was not on the agenda for formal consideration, having only been circulated to contracting parties on 25 November, he felt obliged to say that his authorities had only recently received the report and were studying its implications.

The CONTRACTING PARTIES agreed that this matter should be considered by the Council at its first meeting in 1988.

Sub-point 20(e)(iii). United States - Taxes on petroleum and certain imported substances

Mr. Tello (Mexico) recalled that on 17 June 1987 the Council had adopted the Panel report (L/6175) on the request made by Canada, the European Communities and Mexico concerning the legislation implemented by the US Government to finance the "Superfund". On that occasion, Mexico had expressed its satisfaction with the way the dispute settlement mechanism had worked and with the Council's having considered and resolved the dispute. Since then, almost six months later, it was still not known which measures the US Government intended to adopt, or had adopted, to implement the Panel's recommendation and to comply with the United States' obligations as a contracting party. Mexico wanted to express its continuing concern at the United States' non-compliance with the Panel's recommendation.

Mr. Beck (European Communities) said that this situation showed that one part of the dispute settlement process was the adoption of a report, and that the implementation of recommendations was quite a different part.

There had been ample time for the United States to act on the Panel's recommendation to bring its taxes on petroleum and certain chemical derivatives into line with its GATT obligations. There was still no evidence, at least to the Community, of follow-up action by the United States. The Community was bound to be concerned by this lack of progress. If the situation did not evolve before the next Council meeting, and if there was no provision for adequate compensation, the Community would have no option but to pursue the matter under the second part of Article XXIII:2 and request the suspension of the application of equivalent concessions to the United States.

Mr. Weekes (Canada) recalled that at the 7 October Council meeting, the US representative had said that his authorities were reflecting on how best to address the findings of the Panel. He asked whether the United States was in a position to give the result of that reflection.

Mr. Huslid (Norway) said his delegation subscribed to what had been said by the Community and Canada.

Mr. Samuels (United States) said that his delegation concurred with the Community that this was a serious matter and that there were two parts to the dispute settlement process. In this particular case, implementation of the Panel report required legislation. The US Congress was presently preoccupied with the Omnibus Trade Bill legislation and with matters such as deficit reduction. He assured the CONTRACTING PARTIES that the United States took its obligations seriously; he would report the concerns expressed at the present meeting to his authorities.

Mr. Thomas (Australia) said that his delegation joined others which had called for an early implementation of the Panel's recommendation. While it appreciated the United States' preoccupations, his delegation was sure that the United States had the resources to examine this matter.

Mr. Weekes (Canada) said that while his delegation recognized that the matter could not be taken further, there was a striking resemblance between the US statement at the 7 October Council meeting and at the present Session. He hoped that some progress was being made and asked if the United States had given consideration to what type of legislation would be required to remedy the situation.

Sub-point 20(e)(vi). United States - Section 337 of the Tariff Act of 1930

Mr. Beck (European Communities) referred to the Panel that had been established more than two months earlier, and said that the Community was concerned at the delay in deciding its composition. He said that this was the other half of the dispute settlement procedure where delays could occur, i.e., between a panel's establishment and the time it could begin its work. In this case, the Community had to reserve the possibility of asking the Director-General to complete the panel composition procedures if this could not be done by other means. It was indeed regrettable that in this particular case so much time had elapsed before work could get underway.

Mr. Samuels (United States) said that the Community's statement was helpful. It had not yet proven possible to compose the Panel because of the large number of contracting parties which had expressed interest in this matter. The pool of potential panelists was significantly smaller than usual. In addition, several possible panelists had publicly expressed their views on the matter. The United States also believed it was important that the Panel composition be settled as soon as possible. As soon as competent, neutral panelists were found, the Panel could be composed.

Point 20. Recourse to Articles XXII and XXIII (in general)

Mr. Weekes (Canada) made some general observations on the recourse to Articles XXII and XXIII. The dispute settlement system had been constantly evolving throughout GATT's history. The two Articles on which it was based had been there from the outset, but the procedures giving effect to those Articles had changed over time, sometimes by decisions of the CONTRACTING PARTIES through negotiations, other times by more gradual evolution. In the last few years, there had been an important evolution of the dispute settlement system and significant improvements leading to the way in which it functioned at present. His delegation was not so satisfied with the situation that it did not think further efforts were required; indeed Canada was working in that direction in the Uruguay Round. His delegation thought it appropriate to make this kind of observation before leaving this Point in the Council's report, because the Summary Record would show mainly that there was a divergence of views on a variety of different disputes. It was worth registering some satisfaction that the system was improving and that as of late it had made some substantial gains.

Point 21. Customs unions and free-trade areas; regional agreements

Sub-point 21(c). Canada-United States Free-Trade Agreement

Mr. Beck (European Communities) said that although the full text of this Agreement was still being drafted -- an agreement which the Community considered important and as having major implications for GATT -- the Community was pleased with the conclusion of the negotiations between the United States and Canada, because it hoped that this Agreement would contribute to the development of world trade to the extent that it aimed at creating a free-trade area in conformity with GATT criteria. As soon as the final text became available, the Community would study its implications with utmost interest in the light of the Community's GATT rights, the Uruguay Round and the Community's bilateral relations with each signatory to the Agreement.

Point 22. Waivers under Article XXV:5

Sub-point 22(a). Pakistan - Renegotiation of Schedule

The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the Council's recommendation that the draft decision in Annex I of its report be adopted by the CONTRACTING PARTIES by a vote.

The decision (L/6288) was adopted by 54 votes in favour and one against.

Sub-point 22(d)(ii). United States - Agricultural Adjustment Act

The CHAIRMAN recalled that at its meeting on 10-11 November, the Council had established a working party to examine the 29th and 30th annual reports submitted by the United States under the Decision of 5 March 1955 (BISD 3S/32). Following consultations by the Council Chairman, Mr. Lacarte (Uruguay) had been asked to act as Chairman of that Working Party and had agreed to serve in this capacity.

Point 23. Accession and provisional accession

Sub-point 23(j). Provisional accession of Tunisia

The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the Council's recommendation that the draft decision in Annex II of its report be adopted by the CONTRACTING PARTIES.

The Decision (L/6294) was adopted.

Point 25. Switzerland - Review under paragraph 4 of the Protocol of Accession

The CHAIRMAN recalled that, at its meeting on 10-11 November, the Council had established a working party to conduct the seventh triennial review of the application of the provisions of Paragraph 4 of the Swiss Accession Protocol. Following consultations by the Council Chairman, Mr. Tello (Mexico) had been asked to act as Chairman of that Working Party and had agreed to serve in this capacity.

Point 26. Egypt - Economic Development Tax

Mr. El-Gowhari (Egypt) recalled that Egypt's Protocol of Accession (BISD 17S/2) had allowed it to maintain in effect the "Consolidation of Economic Development Tax" on bound duties at rates not exceeding the rates in force on the date of the Protocol. The measure had been subject to review both by his Government and by the CONTRACTING PARTIES every five years, the latest review having been made in 1985 at which time Egypt had been allowed to maintain the tax in effect until 31 December 1990 (BISD 32S/15). More than one year earlier Egypt had undertaken a review of

a number of policy measures with a view to liberalizing trade, and had subsequently notified to the CONTRACTING PARTIES (L/6148) the abolishment of the Economic Development Tax, effective 22 August 1986. Egypt hoped that such confidence-building measures taken on the eve of the Uruguay Round by a developing country like Egypt would be duly recognized by its trading partners as a contribution to the fostering of the multilateral trading system.

Pre-shipment Inspection Programs

Mr. J. G. (European Communities) said the Community considered this issue of considerable importance and consequence to both importing and exporting, developing and developed countries. The Community believed that the Uruguay Round could play a rôle in bringing about more transparency on the subject of pre-shipment inspection, and in considering what part GATT should play in that area.

Ms. S. (Indonesia) expressed her delegation's support for the proposal of the Community. The proposal to discuss the issue in a wider context was in line with Indonesia's position, which had been expressed in a recent meeting of the Committee on Customs Procedures and Trade Facilitation.

Mr. J. (Nordic countries), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, recalled that these countries expressed recently in the Committee their support for that, while recognizing that pre-shipment inspections were necessary in certain circumstances for a number of developing countries, they were concerned by the apparent proliferation of these control activities which could constitute non-tariff barriers to international trade. This matter contained aspects which went beyond customs valuation matters. Therefore, the Nordic countries supported the view that further consideration of this matter should be pursued in a wider context, e.g., that of the Uruguay Round.

Ms. S. (Argentina) supported the previous statements. There was a need for more transparency in this matter, which was in line with her country's position.

Mr. J. (Nordic countries) supported the previous statements and proposed that this matter be discussed in a broader and more comprehensive context.

Technical Cooperation in Trade Promotion

Work of the Joint Advisory Group

Mr. J. (Norway), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that they valued the ITC's work highly. They wanted to compliment the ITC on its work and to underline the importance which they attached to the strengthening of the ITC as the focal point in the United Nations system for technical cooperation in trade promotion. They noted that the activity of the ITC had been dynamic and growing, with the value of its technical

cooperation activities increasing in 1986 by over 40 per cent compared to the previous year, and passing US\$21 million. He said that it was known that the situation in commodity markets had been very depressed, and prospects for the foreseeable future were also bleak, although there were some encouraging signs. Despite this, a considerable number of developing countries, particularly the poorest, would have to continue to rely heavily on commodity exports as their principal source of foreign exchange. For many countries, part of the response would no doubt be a structural adjustment and diversification away from an excessive commodity dependency. Technical assistance played a major rôle in this effort, and sufficient resources should be made available. The Nordic countries would particularly like to renew their support to the ITC in the areas of market research, market development and promotion, including training in the commodities field, as was also recognized in the Final Act of UNCTAD VII. In their view, the ITC should give priority to trade development in the least developed countries. The Nordic countries also hoped that the ITC's financing basis could be broadened and strengthened; they would continue to appeal to other contracting parties to contribute or to increase their contributions to the ITC's operational activities.

Mr. Girard (Switzerland) said that Switzerland was the second largest contributor to the ITC after Sweden. His delegation strongly supported the statement by Norway.

Mr. Talukdar (Bangladesh) associated Bangladesh, a least-developed country, with the statement by Norway.

Point 32. Administrative and financial matters

Sub-point 22(a). Reports of the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration

The CONTRACTING PARTIES adopted the report of the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration (L/6243), including the recommendations contained therein, and the Resolution on the expenditure of the CONTRACTING PARTIES in 1988 and the ways and means to meet such expenditure, and including the additional recommendation cited in the Understanding read out by the Chairman of the Council at its meeting on 10-11 November.

Sub-point 22(b). GATT income budget: Proposed scale of assessment for 1988

Mr. Smith (Jamaica) referred to the proposal introduced by his delegation at the Council meeting on 10-11 November (L/6249 and Corr.1), which the Council had taken note of. That proposal sought the abolition of the existing two-tiered system of assessment by which some contracting parties were assessed on the basis of their share in total world trade, while others were assessed on the basis of a minimum contribution of 0.12 percent of GATT's income budget. Jamaica was proposing that actual

share in world trade should be the basis of assessment for contracting parties, and wanted this matter to be put to the CONTRACTING PARTIES for decision at an early date. Jamaica was of the view that the existing scale of assessment diverged from the basic principle of equity in that, in assessing the cost of financing GATT's budget, a relatively heavier burden was being borne by countries assessed at the minimum. Jamaica sincerely hoped that the deliberations in the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration would elicit the extent of participation that this important issue deserved. His Government also sincerely hoped and urged that the necessary level of flexibility and willingness to compromise be brought to the discussions, so that an early agreement would be forthcoming and the CONTRACTING PARTIES would be able to take a decision at an early date.

Mr. Nisani (Panama) recalled that when the question of minimum contribution had come up, his delegation had made it clear that Tanzania wanted to have a review of this matter. His delegation shared Jamaica's position and urged that there should be flexibility in this matter and an early resolution thereof, in the interests of the parties concerned.

Mr. Schaberg (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that they had repeatedly indicated their willingness to discuss a new scale of minimum contribution. He wanted to repeat that they saw the need for a broader package of measures aimed at correcting GATT's cash situation through greater financial discipline on the part of all contracting parties. They hoped that the Committee would act expeditiously to find a long-term solution.

Sub-point 2.2. Current cash situation

Mr. Weeks (Canada), speaking under this and the previous sub-point, said that Malina was right in drawing attention to the important issue of contributions. Both the income budget and the cash situation were important questions. Canada was prepared to work through the end of March 1988 to find a solution to these long-standing problems, in particular the arrears in contributions, for which it hoped a long-term solution would be possible. Canada would take care of this situation once and for all. He noted that the Minister had said in her statement¹ that Canada would make its annual contribution for 1988 available in the next fortnight because of its dire estimate of GATT's tight cash situation.

The Director-General said that the Secretariat had been preoccupied for much of the autumn by GATT's difficult cash problem, which had been caused by the failure of many contracting parties to pay their contributions fully and on time. In recent weeks, some Sw F 3.6 million had been received from a number of contracting parties, and in the previous week the United States had informed the Secretariat that it would this week pay the remainder of what it owed for 1986 and part of its 1987

¹SR.43/ST/1.

contribution. Also, Canada had announced -- most generously -- that it would pay its 1988 contribution ahead of time in December 1987. All of these payments were, of course, welcome. They should enable GATT to meet its December obligations, and, by the end of the month, contributions from other "early payers" would start to be received.

Therefore, while the cash situation remained tight, the Secretariat should be able to get through the year without borrowing, and without asking for another additional Council meeting on this subject, nor should it need to borrow in the early months of 1988. He did not want to give the impression that everything was now fine, however, because it was not. Counting in the latest US payment, the GATT was still owed about Sw F 23 million for contributions in 1987 and earlier years. The Secretariat was redoubling its efforts to collect that money. New letters were being sent to contracting parties in arrears, and because many of the previous letters had not been answered, he was meeting with ambassadors resident in Geneva. Unless the Secretariat collected at least a significant portion of what was owed, the GATT could find itself in the same position next autumn. He submitted to the CONTRACTING PARTIES that it was simply intolerable that this organization experienced needless financial crises while engaged in the most far-reaching trade negotiations it had ever undertaken.

He knew that many governments, perhaps almost every government represented in the room, had significant budgetary problems. Fortunately, most paid their contributions fully and in good time. Some, however, apparently regarded their contributions to GATT as something optional, something to be paid if convenient, but not something obligatory like salaries and rent for houses and offices. He said to those governments that GATT was their house too, and just as they paid their rent, they had also to pay what they owed to the GATT.

The Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration had been asked by the Council to make an urgent review of GATT's cash problem -- he welcomed that -- and to report back with recommendations not later than 31 March 1988. He was assured that a three-month time limit had been set for this task. He was sure that the Committee would look carefully at all aspects of this situation (minimum contributions (he recalled the proposal he had himself made in this respect), collection of arrears, possible inducements for paying early and penalties for paying late or not at all). The Committee needed to work quickly on these matters and to reach a consensus, for lack of a consensus would doom the GATT to another round of financial difficulties in the latter part of 1988. He said that the Secretariat, too, would work hard on solving this problem, and he assured the CONTRACTING PARTIES that the matter would also have his own close personal attention.

Sub-point 20(d)(ii). Japan - Restrictions on certain agricultural products
(continued)

The CHAIRMAN asked if the CONTRACTING PARTIES could revert to this matter at the present time.

Mr. Hatano (Japan) said that his delegation was not yet ready to continue discussing this matter and asked that it be taken up later, after Item 3.

The CHAIRMAN said that this would be done.

Activities of GATT (continued)

The CONTRACTING PARTIES adopted the report of the Committee on Trade and Development (L/6241) and took note of the reports of the MTN Committees and Councils (L/6259, L/6240, L/6257, L/6232, L/6252, L/6258, L/6247, L/6254 and L/6266).

Summing up the discussion at the Session thus far, the CHAIRMAN remarked on some of the main themes emerging from that discussion. He said that many contracting parties had referred to the GATT's performance over its forty years of activity. It was felt that the GATT had proved to be an indispensable instrument of multilateral cooperation which had built up and maintained a relatively open trading system. However, it had been pointed out that the challenge of improving and strengthening the multilateral trading system required renewed efforts on the part of contracting parties, especially at present when the GATT was confronting a serious crisis in the international economic environment.

With regard to the current economic and trade situation, there had been a widely held view that the recent performance of the world economy and of international trade, as well as the medium-term prospects, were disappointing and gave rise to a good deal of concern. It had been noted that uncertainties resulting from the persistence of major disequilibria in the world economy, notably in trade flows, international payments and exchange rates, coupled with associated tensions in the policy environment, had contributed to lack of confidence on the part of economic operators. This lack of confidence had manifested itself in the recent stock market crash and increased instability in currency markets. Many contracting parties had emphasized that the present economic situation posed serious questions for global economic prosperity and for growth and development in developing countries. The particular difficulties faced by these countries, including their debt situation, had been stressed.

Many contracting parties had underscored the need for greater international cooperation in order to avoid a further deterioration of the trading system. In this context, several speakers had emphasized the responsibility of all contracting parties, and in particular of the major trading countries, in resisting protectionist pressures and in pursuing concerted macro-economic policies. Particular concern had been expressed at the dangers of an increase in protectionism as a consequence of the weakening of domestic demand in these countries. It had been recognized that any protective trade measures could only aggravate existing difficulties in the international economic environment.

A number of contracting parties had underscored that in the current trading environment, the Uruguay Round negotiations should proceed as expeditiously as possible, and that tensions in the trade policy area

should be resolved through recourse to the regular GATT dispute settlement mechanism. The importance of collective resistance to protectionist pressures by implementing the standstill and rollback commitments had also been emphasized.

Several contracting parties had referred to the interlinkages between trade, financial and monetary policies and the need for a more concerted approach to these matters, as well as for strengthened cooperation between the GATT and other international organizations dealing with financial and monetary issues. However, the point had been made that the GATT could not provide the remedy for shortcomings and deficiencies in monetary and financial policies. Therefore, results in the Uruguay Round should not be compromised by developments in other areas.

While it had been generally felt that negotiations in the first year of the Uruguay Round had made satisfactory progress, several contracting parties had expressed concern over certain developments in individual negotiating groups. The need for adhering to the common understandings reached in Punta del Este had been emphasized. It had also been noted that the progress of work was not equal in all negotiating groups and that there was therefore no room for complacency. A number of contracting parties had underlined that the principle of differential and more favourable treatment should be fully applied in negotiations, and that developed countries should not expect reciprocity for commitments made by them to reduce or to remove trade barriers, and should not seek concessions that were inconsistent with the development, financial and trade needs of developing countries.

The question of achieving early results by the end of 1988 for the mid-term review of the negotiations had also been addressed. This would provide the right signals to economic operators, improve confidence and firmly set the pace for a positive outcome from the Uruguay Round in accordance with the objectives laid down in the 1986 Ministerial Declaration. Various speakers had cited issues or areas where efforts should be made with a view to achieving early results. A number of product areas had been mentioned. The view had also been expressed that it would not be desirable at this stage to foresee the outcome of the mid-term review in terms of results to be achieved in specific sectors, and that it was important to achieve progress across the broad front of negotiations. It had also been suggested that Ministers meet not only for the mid-term review to be carried out by the Trade Negotiations Committee, but also at other major turning points in the negotiations.

More generally, it had been felt that the growing linkages between international trade and monetary policies, as well as between international trade and domestic policies, might call for increased Ministerial involvement in the GATT with a view to establishing a continuing process of negotiations.

In his view, two basic points had emerged from the general discussion: first, the importance, recognized by all, of intensifying efforts both at the political and the technical levels to ensure that the objectives of the Uruguay Round were fully met; and second, the importance of a strengthened

open and multilateral trading system as a major element in maintaining confidence and safeguarding an economic environment conducive to growth and prosperity.

The meeting adjourned at 12.00 noon.