

GATT/1632  
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**PETER SUTHERLAND TO VISIT BEIJING TO DISCUSS  
GATT/WTO MEMBERSHIP WITH CHINESE LEADERS**

Peter Sutherland, Director General of GATT, will visit China from Monday 9 May to Saturday 14 May. The principal objective of the visit will be to discuss with Chinese leaders the current negotiations aimed at bringing China back into the GATT and subsequently into the new World Trade Organization.

During the week, Mr Sutherland will meet with President Jiang Zemin, Premier Li Peng, Vice-Premier Li Lanqing, Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation Ms Wu Yi and Vice-Minister for Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation Gu Yong Jiang, as well as other ministers and senior officials.

Commenting on his visit, Mr Sutherland said today:

"I do not think that any GATT member doubts the importance of China becoming a full and active participant in the multilateral trading system - the GATT as it is now, and in the future, the World Trade Organization. All of them are prepared to work hard and in good faith to see it happen.

"Of course, the integration of such a large economy in transition presents special challenges. That is why I look forward to discussing in practical terms with the Chinese leadership the actions and commitments that will be necessary, especially in relation to transparency and enforcement of obligations, if the current process of negotiation in GATT is to be brought to a conclusion in the near future."

On Wednesday 11 May, Mr Sutherland will address two conferences - one organized by the International Herald Tribune and the State Commission for Restructuring Economic Systems, and the other organized by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation.

Notes to editors

1. China was an original member of the GATT but has been treated as a non-contracting party since 1950 when the Chiang-kai-Shek regime in Taiwan notified the withdrawal of China from the GATT.
2. China became an observer to the GATT in 1982 and a member of the Multifibre Arrangement (affecting trade in textiles and clothing) in 1984. It applied to resume its GATT membership in 1986 and a Working Party was established to consider the application in the following year.

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