

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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## PROGRAMME FOR THE EXPANSION OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE

### Statement by the Representative of Spain on 14 November 1967

The Spanish delegation would like to associate itself with other delegations whose representatives have already congratulated the Director-General on his brilliant performance at the helm of GATT over the past twenty years, his constant efforts towards expansion of international trade, his demonstrated resolve to overcome obstacles standing in the way of trade liberalization, and on the numerous and fortunate initiatives that he has presented to delegations in this field, thus assisting our work and guiding our activities in pursuance of the objectives proclaimed by the contracting parties when the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade was originally drawn up.

The most recent of these fortunate initiatives by the Director-General was his proposal to include in the agenda for this twenty-fourth session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES Item 3 entitled "Programme for the Expansion of International Trade".

The "programme of action directed towards an expansion of international trade" adopted at the thirteenth session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES defined the line of conduct to be followed with a view to attainment of the objectives of the General Agreement, concentrating on three principal topics, as follows: tariff reductions through further negotiations; study of non-tariff measures hindering expansion of trade in agricultural products; and study of measures for the expansion of the trade of less-developed countries in order to increase their export earnings and diversify their economies.

As regards the first objective of the programme for the expansion of international trade - tariff reductions through negotiations - my Government considers that the Dillon Round, and above all the recent Kennedy Round, have together constituted an important advance towards attainment of this objective.

There is, of course, still much to be done in the field of tariff reductions on industrial products, and the Director-General's suggestions for future activities in this field deserve study and consideration, but there seems to be no immediate urgency for this.

The Kennedy Round is very recent, and it is logical that its results are still being analysed. What is important and urgent in this field is to consolidate the results obtained and to dispel the fear that those results may be nullified to some extent because of certain protectionist movements. That is no reason to prevent us from endeavouring to determine the level of tariff protection still remaining, and identify non-tariff barriers. Nevertheless, to speak of a phased programme for binding zero-level duties or eliminating customs duties that are at a low level seems to us not very effective and to have more of a visual effect than any practical significance.

Accordingly, in our opinion and taking into account the scant success of the Kennedy Round in regard to trade in agricultural products and the expansion of trade of less-developed countries, GATT should concentrate its activities in the near future on these two points in the programme for expansion of international trade.

Until now GATT has not found satisfactory solutions to these two problems, and the inevitable consequence is that while progress is being made towards liberalizing trade in industrial products, we are at a standstill where the agricultural sector is concerned.

Although Committee II did a great deal of work in compiling of documentation, and examining and confronting agricultural policies, it was nevertheless not able to formulate measures and procedures to be adopted in order to offset, in the field of international trade, the protective effects of the agricultural policies applied by the principal consumer countries.

Although the Resolutions adopted by the Ministers in May 1963 and May 1964 recognized the importance of agricultural products in international trade, pointing out that the trade negotiations should create acceptable conditions of access to world markets for them, the true situation - as we all know - is that the results obtained have been very poor and fall far short of the aspirations held at the beginning of the Kennedy Round by numerous countries which - like Spain - produce and export agricultural products.

Consequently, the Spanish delegation is in entire agreement with the Director-General's proposal for revitalizing Committee II and revising its terms of reference to enable it to consider present-day problems connected with international trade in agricultural products.

In addition, we consider that it would be desirable for the Group on Cereals, the Group on Meat and the Group on Dairy Products to continue their work, and that in addition special groups should be created to consider other agricultural products, for example fruit, vegetables, wine, fats and oils, all of which are of great significance in the export trade of many contracting parties.

Mr. Chairman, in connexion with the third topic in the programme for the expansion of international trade, relating to barriers to the trade of developing countries, my delegation wishes once more to affirm its support for the aspirations and requests expressed on so many occasions by the developing countries.

In our view, the establishment by the industrial countries of a programme of action covering the principles and objectives set forth in Article XXXVI, together with the fulfilment of the individual and collective obligations deriving from Articles XXXVII and XXXVIII, would constitute a fundamental basis for eliminating or easing many of the problems with which developing countries are beset.

In this order of ideas, perhaps, the most desirable approach - and this is not an original thought, I believe I have heard it expressed on a number of occasions by the eminent representative of Chile - would be to consider the possibility of scheduling new trade negotiations at a future date with the fundamental target and specific motive of improving terms of trade for the developing countries; as we all know this was not originally an objective of the Kennedy Round and although the developing countries undoubtedly did benefit from some concessions, these were always of a marginal character and were never the basic element of the negotiations.

Meanwhile, the first essential step will be to consolidate the concessions granted in the Kennedy Round, and to ensure their advance implementation in respect of products of special interest to developing countries.