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REVIEW OF THE WORK OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES AND FUTURE PROGRAMME

Statement by Mr. Erban Isil, Director-General of Treasury of Turkey, on 24 November 1967

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to pay tribute to Mr. Eric Wyndham White for his constructive leadership throughout these twenty years of the General Agreement. I should also like to express my deep appreciation for the quite able secretariat.

I should like to make some comments on the past experience of GATT. As we all know, efforts towards the liberalization of international trade and stabilization of tariffs in general, have been of significant value. It is, however, not easily possible to say the same for agricultural products. Nor can one say that the expansion of trade of developing countries has been satisfactory during these two decades. It is indeed very important that the CONTRACTING PARTIES have these two issues in their future work programme.

In this connexion, I should like to say a few words as regards the future work. We think that trade liberalization and multilateralism of international trade should be amongst primary objectives. We sincerely hope that steps will be taken in this direction.

Now I would like to turn on the unresolved issues. We strongly support the creation of a Committee on Agriculture and its terms of reference should cover all agricultural products that have importance in international trade with a view to expand their exports.

In the case of the expansion of the developing countries we see an urgent issue. That is hard pressing barriers to the exports of these countries. When I say hard pressing barriers of course I mean both tariff and non-tariff barriers.

As you may recall from the Report of Ad Hoc Group on assessment of Kennedy Round results for the products of developing countries, excluding petroleum products and preferential sources, 42 per cent of their taxable exports to six major developed countries have not benefited any tariff reduction.

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Therefore, we think that urgent trade problems of the developing countries which are listed in the Joint Declaration of the Developing Countries at the end of the Kennedy Round and in the recent report of the Trade and Development Committee, will be given priority during the future work of the GATT.

As to the expansion of trade between developing countries, my delegation welcomes the participation of the countries which are not members of GATT in this exercise.

But we strongly believe that efforts for expanding the trade among developing countries will be limited unless external payments problems remain untouched in this context.

Finally, I should like to emphasize that our future work requires a certain degree of urgency. If we can proceed and conclude our work expeditiously, then the contribution to the expansion of developing countries trade will be valuable. On the other hand, if some considerable length of time is spent to achieve concrete results then the contribution will be, of course, limited.