

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

MTN/TP/7

22 October 1976

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## Multilateral Trade Negotiations

### Group "Tropical Products"

#### CHAIRMAN'S SUMMING-UP AND RECORD OF DECISIONS AT MEETING OF 18-20 OCTOBER 1976

1. The Group held its sixth meeting on 18-20 October 1976. The Secretary-General of UNCTAD or his representative was invited to attend the meeting as an observer. In accordance with its agenda, the Group reviewed progress in the bilateral or plurilateral negotiations since its last meeting, carried forward the multilateral discussion of the offers made and discussed other outstanding matters including the implementation of concessions and the future activities of the Group.
2. In commenting on the consultations and negotiations which had taken place many participants expressed serious disappointment at the slow and inadequate progress which had been made in this sector of the negotiations, having regard to the special and priority treatment provided for in the Tokyo Declaration. Reference was also made to paragraph 6 of the Tokyo Declaration concerning the need for special treatment for the least-developed among the developing countries. Representatives of a large number of requesting countries stated that they considered the offers inadequate in terms of product coverage and scope and content and regretted that it had not been possible to achieve any significant improvements in the course of consultations with offer-making countries. In this respect, they welcomed the supplementary offer of further contributions which had recently been tabled by one offer-making country and hoped that offer-making countries would make a major effort to improve their offers in the coming weeks.
3. Representatives of offer-making countries stated that their governments had made an important effort to table significant and substantial offers on tropical products. Some of them were considering the possibility of making further efforts in this regard taking into account the effort they had already made. In certain cases they were awaiting further information and clarifications with a view to considering possibilities for further improvements. Some delegations stressed their readiness to enter into further bilateral or plurilateral consultations to this end. Reference was also made to the scope for responding to certain requests as the work proceeds in other Groups and Sub-Groups, taking into account the possibilities of differential treatment for developing countries.

4. Representatives of requesting countries reiterated their position that any contributions they would make to the negotiations consistent with their development, financial and trade needs, would be on the basis of the additional benefits they receive within the global context of the negotiations, in the light of the relevant provisions of the Tokyo Declaration. Representatives of most offer-making countries stated that their authorities were not seeking contributions from developing countries in response to the offers tabled on tropical products although some trusted that appropriate contributions would be made by developing countries in due course within the overall framework of the negotiations. One representative, in reiterating that all elements of his country's offer were negotiable, indicated that his delegation was ready to enter into further consultations and negotiations on all relevant points, including suggestions with respect to the contributions of developing countries. However, his country was not prepared to make unilateral concessions.

5. In the context of the multilateral discussion of the offers, reference was made to specific suggestions and requests on individual items and the consideration given to or the action taken with respect to these requests. It was noted that these matters could be pursued in the course of further bilateral and plurilateral consultations.

6. The Group noted that further bilateral and plurilateral consultations and negotiations on tropical products in certain cases could be helpful in achieving an improved list of concessions and contributions for implementation at an early date.

7. The Group turned to the implementation of offers made on tropical products. The Group noted that all participants continued to adhere to the agreed aim of achieving concrete results on tropical products in 1976 and agreed that the offer-making countries should work towards the implementation of their concessions and contributions on 1 January 1977 or the soonest possible date thereafter early in 1977 consistently with their domestic procedures. The Group urged that any specific problems relating to the implementation of the offers made by any individual country be resolved through appropriate consultations. It was recognized that offer-making countries should notify the Director-General by 15 December 1976 or the earliest possible date thereafter details of the concessions and contributions they had implemented or intended to implement and the proposed date of implementation, legal status and other relevant points, for circulation to participants in the negotiations, respecting the requirements of confidentiality. Non-tariff measure concessions would also be included in the notifications.

8. It was understood that m.f.n. concessions agreed to, would be subject to bindings. Where m.f.n. concessions could not be bound at this stage, they could be implemented on a de facto basis.

9. GSP contributions would be included in the list of notifications. Some requesting countries raised the question of the security of such contributions and stated that they would wish to pursue this matter further at the appropriate time.

10. Some delegations of offer-making countries said that implementation of the concessions or contributions offered by them on tropical products reflected the special and priority action taken by them in this area of the negotiations. They said that any further action with respect to tropical products will be undertaken in the overall context of the negotiations.

11. Other delegations for their part stated that after the implementation of initial offers as regards tropical products, the Group should pursue its efforts with a view to securing meaningful results in conformity with the special and priority treatment provided for in paragraph 3(f) of the Tokyo Declaration as regards this sector of the negotiations.

12. The Group agreed that at its next meeting, it would review developments with regard to the concessions and contributions notified and their implementation. It would also review progress in the bilateral and plurilateral negotiations which are expected to take place. The Group will keep under review the question of promoting further progress in negotiations relating to trade in tropical products having regard to the points contained in the Guidelines (MTN/TP/1) and taking into account developments in the other Groups of the TNC and their Sub-Groups.

13. The Group agreed that the date of its next meeting would be determined by the Chairman in consultation with interested delegations and the secretariat.