

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

MTN/AG/9

20 December 1978

Special Distribution

Multilateral Trade Negotiations

Group "Agriculture"

MEETING OF DECEMBER 1978

Chairman's Summing-Up

1. Group "Agriculture" met on 19 December 1978.
2. It invited the Secretary-General of UNCTAD or his representative to attend this session of the Group as an observer.
3. The Group had before it the second revision of the proposed Draft Code of Conduct for Preventing Technical Barriers to Trade ("Draft Standards Code", MTN/NTM/W/192/Rev.2).
4. The Group noted that this revision incorporated a number of additional amendments resulting from informal consultations among developed and developing countries; these amendments were designed to facilitate a decision by Group "Agriculture" regarding the application of the Draft Code to agricultural products.
5. The Group took note of the document.
6. A number of points were made. Some delegations expressed reservations concerning certain specific aspects of the Code.
7. It was noted that the text of the Draft Code would require examination, for instance to review the sections on institutions and dispute settlement in the light of the texts drawn up in other areas of the negotiations. A number of proposals on these sections would be reverted to in that connexion.
8. Subject to the statements made and the reservations expressed, and to the understanding that delegations retained the right to revert to proposals on any matter in the Sub-Group on Technical Barriers to Trade, the Group agreed that the Draft Standards Code was applicable to agricultural products. Accordingly, the Group decided that the square brackets in Section 1.3 should be removed, so that the Section would then read: "All products, including industrial and agricultural products, shall be subject to the provisions of this Code."

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9. The Group had before it document MTN/INF/43, headed "Multilateral Agricultural Framework". There was an initial discussion aimed at clarifying a number of issues contained in the document.

10. There was a broad consensus in the Group that an improved level of international co-operation in matters affecting agricultural policies and trade was both desirable and necessary, and that a mechanism for consultation on such matters under the aegis of GATT could be an appropriate instrument towards this objective.

11. The Group agreed that the issues raised in the document merited further examination in depth and that it would revert to the matter.

12. It was agreed that the next meeting of the Group would be set by the Chairman in consultation with delegations.