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GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

Multilateral Trade Negotiations

Original: English

Group "Agriculture"

Sub-Group on Grains

STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES

ON 20 OCTOBER 1975

1. In our last meeting on 24 June, my delegation proposed certain steps to be taken so that this Group could address itself constructively and expeditiously to the paramount problems which we are called upon to solve. In this context, we cited improved market access, export subsidies, safeguards, and the interrelated issue of supply and market access. (MTN/GR/W/4)
2. We then proposed that the Sub-Group proceed in its work on the basis of a secretariat documentation which would list the various trade inhibiting and trade distorting measures applied by various countries in the grains sector.
3. We further suggested that the Sub-Group (a) ascertain the economic effects of these measures; (b) consider specific proposals of how to deal with them; (c) communicate the results to other groups and work in conjunction with these groups so as to arrive at a harmonious and balanced development of all the elements subject to negotiations.
4. When making this proposal, the United States based itself on the terms of reference under which the Sub-Group Grains was set up, and in particular, on paragraph 2 of the summing-up of the Chairman of 8 May (MTN/AG/1). This paragraph indicates the linkage between the work of the Tariff and Non-Tariff Measures Groups.
5. Since procedures are still being worked out to implement paragraph 2 of the 8 May agreement, one of the assumptions on which our approach is based is not yet realized. We believe that in this respect progress has been made.
6. On the understanding that this problem will be solved, the United States is now willing to slightly modify the procedural aspects of its original proposal in order to move forward in a more pragmatic way which would meet the pressing interests of our partners.

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7. The United States therefore proposes:

(a) that the Sub-Group agree that countries having definite negotiating interests in grains which are of immediate and highest priority and which have a direct bearing on their trade notify them to the secretariat. Such notifications should also specify the problems to be addressed and should include concrete suggestions for the solution of these problems. We believe that these notifications could commence immediately.

(b) Based on these notifications and after the procedural issues have been settled the Sub-Group would take up these problems and proposals.

The Sub-Group would then evaluate the suggested solutions for each problem raised in order to ascertain how they could contribute to a multilateral solution.

In this context, it would have to be recognized that bilateral discussions will also contribute to the eventual development of multilateral solutions. If bilateral or plurilateral discussions appear necessary, consultations among the countries involved would be held under the auspices of the Sub-Group.

(c) The notification procedure would be kept open and additional problems arising from additional notifications would be taken up at a successive stage.

(d) The United States would be prepared to give priority attention to the problems of developing countries as a step towards implementing paragraph 5 of the Tokyo Declaration. Thus our proposal would afford developing countries the opportunity to notify those problems affecting the trade in grains which are of greatest interest to them.

(e) Last but not least, the Sub-Group, at an appropriate time, would also consider multilateral solutions relevant to grains which are under consideration in other MTN Groups or Sub-Groups.