

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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Multilateral Trade Negotiations

Original: French

Group "Agriculture"

Sub-Group on Meat

PROPOSAL BY THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS IN THE BOVINE MEAT SECTOR

Statement Made by the Representative of the European Economic Community on 17 October 1977

1. At earlier meetings of the Sub-Group on Meat, the Community proposed to its partners an approach to the negotiations in the bovine meat sector that is designed to ensure better functioning of the international market by the negotiation of a "Multilateral Framework Agreement on Bovine Meat" and the adoption of rules for agreed disciplines as between the exporting country and the importing country concerned.

The Community explained this approach, proposing in particular that the Multilateral Framework Agreement on Bovine Meat should comprise a series of general provisions (mutual information, consultations, etc.) together with specific commitments to be entered into at bilateral or plurilateral level by importing countries and exporting countries, in respect of management of export and/or import policies.

2. With regard to the scope and content of the Multilateral Framework Agreement on Bovine Meat, on 5 July 1976 the Community made concrete suggestions to its partners in the negotiation, indicating that in its view a broad consensus should be sought first of all, within the Sub-Group, on such multilateral machinery.

The Community underlines once more the importance that it attaches to the establishment of a Multilateral Framework Agreement on Bovine Meat, having already expounded the relevant arguments in July 1976. In addition, however, it considers it necessary to reach a high degree of consensus on the content of the Framework Agreement so as, on the one hand, better to define the elements of bilateral or plurilateral discussions that should intervene in practice, taking into account the structure of trade in this sector, and on the other hand, so as to ensure consistency as between the reciprocal commitments that might be entered into.

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3. Once an agreement of principle has been reached on the main elements of which a Framework Agreement should be composed, it would then be opportune in the Community's view that the process of bilateral or plurilateral negotiations between interested importing countries and exporting countries be engaged without delay.

In this connexion, the Sub-Group should be kept informed as to the manner in which such bilateral or plurilateral negotiations have been or are to be engaged, and how they are proceeding.

4. For its part, the Community can state here and now that it has the intention of engaging negotiations, at the appropriate moment, with each country expressing an interest therein, as to what might be the measures most appropriate for ensuring better stabilization of the market, with a view to fostering an expansion of trade for certain specific categories of the bovine meat sector.

The Community states furthermore that it is ready to enter into negotiations on the conditions for the conduct of its trade with countries that might import products of the bovine meat sector from the Community.

5. The Community considers that today's announcement of its intentions will engage the offer process in respect of bilateral or plurilateral negotiation with its suppliers and its clients, to the extent that the other partners that are members of the Sub-Group engage in a like process.

In these conditions, the Community proposes that the procedure to this end be discussed and accepted in this Sub-Group in the course of the present session.