

**MULTILATERAL TRADE
NEGOTIATIONS
THE URUGUAY ROUND**

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Group of Negotiations on Goods (GATT)
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Statement by Mexico

The delegation of Mexico has been analysing, with the importance they deserve, the proposals submitted at the most recent meetings of this Negotiating Group and, in particular, their implications for the development of our agriculture and its place in the international market.

We agree, totally, that the crisis of international trade in agriculture demands the adoption of urgent measures to halt the deterioration of those economies for which agricultural imports and exports are one of the fundamentals of their growth and, at the same time, to ensure the satisfactory development of agriculture in all countries, in keeping with the spirit of the Declaration of Punta del Este.

We feel that up to now there has been disregard for a key problem in the imbalance of the international market for agricultural products, namely the contradiction between the accumulation of record agricultural surpluses and the process of growing hunger in the world. This contradiction has, on other occasions, been treated as a regional maladjustment between supply and demand. For us, however, it indicates the inability of a market in which there are clear tendencies towards concentration and monopoly, to reach levels of balance that would allow it to expand.

In view of this paradoxical situation, our attention is drawn to the fact that the various proposals are directed towards the need to reduce production as a mechanism for making supply and demand meet higher prices.

We find that this approach does not duly take into account the interests of those of us which are developing countries that import agricultural products and which form a significant, albeit dispersed, sector of world demand.

We believe that any negotiations on world agricultural trade must also take into consideration the interests and problems of importers. Let us not forget that they constitute another face of the market.

The real possibilities of reaching viable consensus agreements in these negotiations lie in the recognition of the legitimate interests of all the participants. This, in our view, is the basis and justification for the existence of GATT.

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Accordingly, we wish to present, very briefly, those basic principles which, from the standpoint of Mexico as a developing country which imports primary products, must be included in any agreed reform of world trade in agriculture:

1. Special and more favourable treatment for developing countries which, like Mexico, have an agricultural sector with very special historical social and political particularities, as provided by Part IV of the General Agreement.
2. Food security, which justifies the efforts of every sovereign nation to ensure the supply of its basic food consumption.
3. As regards the administration of national agricultural policies, in countries like Mexico the promotion of production and consumption constitutes the only way to achieve all-round rural development and therefore cannot be renounced. Moreover, these policies are far from representing a barrier to international trade.

The delegation of Mexico believes that the negotiations taking place in this Group must progress in parallel and in step with the other Negotiating Groups, in accordance with the Declaration of Punta del Este, and especially with the Group on Tariffs, so as to give the negotiating process greater solidity and clarity.

On the basis of the principles mentioned, we are prepared to consider in a constructive manner any initiative for reform which includes the totality of products and elimination of trade barriers of every kind within a gradual, step-by-step process.

The above ideas constitute a preliminary contribution designed to stress the need for the countries which are net importers of primary agricultural products, which constitute a large and diverse group, to come forward and join together in order to present concrete proposals and respond jointly to other proposals. It is necessary for exporting countries to hear and take into account what we, the countries which take their products, have to say.

We invite those countries to begin a process of consultation for the purpose of examining the possibilities of putting forward a joint proposal.