

**MULTILATERAL TRADE
NEGOTIATIONS
THE URUGUAY ROUND**

RESTRICTED
MTN.TNC/5
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Special Distribution

Trade Negotiations Committee

TRADE NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE

Fifth meeting: 18 February 1988

1. The Trade Negotiations Committee held its fifth meeting, under the chairmanship of Mr. Arthur Dunkel.

I. Mid-term TNC meeting at Ministerial level: date and practical arrangements

2. The Chairman reported that, as agreed at the last meeting (MTN.TNC/4, paragraph 26), he had held intensive consultations with a view to putting the TNC in a position, at this meeting, to take the necessary practical decisions. He recalled that the TNC was under an obligation to meet at the end of the year (MTN.TNC/2, Annex, paragraph 8) and that the Ministerial Declaration provided for it to meet, as appropriate, at Ministerial level. While there had, initially, been a proposal to hold yearly Ministerial meetings, there had since then been an expectation that a Ministerial meeting would be held in mid-course. He further recalled that there had originally been three candidates for the venue for the launching of the Round (Brussels, Montreal and Punta del Este) and that, when withdrawing in favour of Punta del Este, the other two had expressed a strong wish to host other important meetings in the course of the Round. He now thanked the EEC for agreeing to wait further for its turn.

3. In the light of the consultations he had held, he was in a position to propose that the TNC agree to hold its end-of-year meeting at Ministerial level in Montreal in the week beginning 5 December 1988. He noted that, should the closeness of the this date to that so far set aside for the regular session of CONTRACTING PARTIES cause practical difficulties, it might be necessary, in due course and in the appropriate place, to re-examine the timing of that session.

4. The representative of the EEC indicated that his delegation would not oppose a consensus and that it would indeed take part in it. The decision to do so had, however, been subordinated to three considerations: (i) the regular session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES should be held as usual in Geneva, early enough in November 1988 to avoid any unfortunate overlap with a meeting the nature of which was fundamentally different; (ii) anything

would be possible at the proposed Ministerial meeting, as long as the fundamental concept of globality, itself based on the principle of balance, was respected. The meeting would allow Ministers to give the necessary political impetus to the negotiations on the basis of stock-taking in all areas of the negotiations, including services. There could be no question of singling out individual areas other than the only one already agreed on for priority treatment, namely tropical products; (iii) the only basis for decision-taking was consensus.

5. The Committee took note of the statement and agreed to hold its end-of-year meeting at Ministerial level in Montreal in the week beginning 5 December 1988.

6. The representative of Israel stressed the importance, not only for the progress of the negotiations but also for the individual participants, of full Ministerial participation in the proposed meeting. He regretted that the date suggested would make Ministerial participation difficult for his country, but he was not opposing the consensus on the date.

7. The representative of China welcomed the decision that had been taken. The Ministerial meeting would enable the TNC to take stock of progress overall, identify areas where early agreements could be achieved, find ways of moving the negotiations forward and send a strong and much-needed political signal to the world concerning the participants' determination to resist and reduce protectionism.

8. The representative of Australia associated himself with the statement by the representative of China and recalled that, as had been stated in the previous meeting of the TNC, it might in due course be necessary to provide for the possibility of holding a session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES on the same occasion as the TNC Ministerial meeting to permit possible implementation of early results. He did not see the necessity for restating one of the fundamental principles of the Punta del Este Declaration, the principle of globality.

9. The Committee took note of the statements.

II. Date of next meeting

10. The Committee agreed to hold its next regular meeting in the week beginning 25 July 1988, the exact date to be fixed after consultations, and noted that, if necessary, an earlier meeting could be called.