

**MULTILATERAL TRADE  
NEGOTIATIONS  
THE URUGUAY ROUND**

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Group of Negotiations on Goods (GATT)  
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SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY REGULATIONS AND BARRIERS

Submitted by Jamaica

The report of the second meeting of the Working Group on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Regulations and Barriers - MTN.GNG/NG5/WGSP/1 indicated the following:

- (1) agreement that there should be further study as to why the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade apparently had not proven effective in dealing with agricultural trade problems, specifically as regards sanitary and phytosanitary regulations and barriers;
- (2) agreement to review existing notification procedures, including those under the Standards Code and the relevant international standards organizations, with a view to improving transparency and surveillance under the GATT of sanitary and phytosanitary regulations and barriers;
- (3) it was also agreed that further elaboration on the items under the Working Group work programme, particularly as regards short-term measures, and the needs of developing countries, should take place in this Negotiating Group.

We are pleased to have this opportunity to address short-term action in this area. In the proposal put forward by the group of countries which co-sponsored MTN.GNG/NG5/W/74 it was emphasized that there should be short-term action taken in respect of sanitary and phytosanitary regulations and barriers. Furthermore we take the position that short-term measures should be taken in respect of all three indents of the negotiating objective, so as to ensure a balance of benefits to all participants.

We have participated in the work of the Working Group on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Regulations and Barriers and are aware that its work thus far has focused on long-term action in this area. We understand that certain issues such as those regarding the strengthening of GATT rules and disciplines, harmonization and equivalence will have to be treated in the long-term. We are convinced, however, that there is scope for short-term action to increase the transparency of measures and to encourage more speedy and effective conciliation when complaints arise.

We propose that short-term action by developed countries might include:

- (i) designation of contact points where enquiries of exporters from developing countries could be answered;
- (ii) organization of courses for exporters from developing countries;
- (iii) identification of existing regulations and conformity assessment procedures (including their presentation in a user-friendly documentation) for agricultural products of special export interests to developing countries;
- (iv) establishment of an advance information system on forthcoming changes in phytosanitary and sanitary regulations and procedures and the conduct of consultations with the major suppliers among developing countries;
- (v) negotiating of bilateral and multilateral acceptance schemes for products of export interest to developing countries.

Furthermore, we anticipate that the Working Group on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Regulations and Barriers already established, will be providing an opportunity to discuss the nature and trade effects of concrete phytosanitary and sanitary measures affecting exports of developing countries. The discussion should be based, inter alia, on reverse notifications by developing countries and the GATT secretariat.

Finally we urge that at the Mid-Term Review, developed contracting parties undertake a political commitment to fast-track conciliation in respect of complaints brought by developing countries. This is without prejudice to any longer-term modalities that might be developed.