

**MULTILATERAL TRADE  
NEGOTIATIONS  
THE URUGUAY ROUND**

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Trade Negotiations Committee  
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COSTA RICA

Statement by Mr. Luis Diego Escalante  
Minister of Foreign Trade

I cannot overlook this opportunity to thank, on behalf of our delegation, the City of Montreal and the Government of Canada for the wonderful hospitality we have received during this important Ministerial Meeting.

The Government of Costa Rica would like, in the first place, to reiterate its support for the multilateral trading system as established by the General Agreement: one designed to evolve, to push back protectionism, to eliminate distortions and to be more open and more durable.

This negotiating round has an extremely important rôle to play in the search for an international order that would facilitate the balanced development of all its contracting parties so that national efforts carried out within the borders of the less-developed countries may be supplemented by the support of the international community in their pursuit of a favourable place for their economies in the international trading system.

In recent years, Costa Rica has been implementing measures to foster a more effective and competitive economy so as to create the conditions for more active participation in the world economy. Thus, our country's development strategy is based on the creation of a dynamic and diversified export sector. To this end, a structural adjustment programme is being promoted domestically, with the aim of establishing the right conditions for an increase in exports.

Internationally, we are seeking more active participation in the appropriate international fora. In this regard, the process of our accession to the General Agreement is moving forward rapidly.

Costa Rica presented its formal request for permanent accession on 2 June 1987. We hope that our inclusion in the General Agreement will take effect as soon as possible and will constitute a contribution to the success of these negotiations.

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Moreover, to the extent possible, we also wish to participate actively in the working groups of this negotiating round with a view to strengthening the multilateral trading system on an increasingly equitable basis.

Costa Rica is prepared to adapt its trade policy to the GATT principles wherever necessary and attaches great importance to the benefits deriving from its accession. However, it hopes for the understanding and support of the contracting parties in the sense that, in the determination of the progressive adjustments to our trade policy, due consideration is given to the constraints imposed on us by our external debt and, especially, to the efforts we have made domestically to carry out our adjustment programmes without injury to the social standards of Costa Rican society.

We, therefore, follow with great interest the treatment given to the various subjects of this round of negotiations, especially those relating to the establishment of more favourable treatment for the developing countries in order to stimulate their exports. In this mid-term review, stress must be laid on the need to accelerate progress in the groups concerned with improved market access and the use of safeguards, as these subjects are of great interest to developing countries especially as regards trade in textiles, clothing and tropical products.

There is also an urgent need for a positive response to the proposals for linking the problems of external indebtedness and development with those of trade.

Consequently, we are hopeful about the possibilities offered by this negotiating round of strengthening the multilateral trading system and the GATT itself, to the benefit of all the contracting parties.

To conclude, I would like to express my gratitude for the preparatory work done by the delegations of the contracting parties, by the Director-General, Mr. Arthur Dunkel, and by the GATT secretariat - efforts which have been essential for the success of this Ministerial Meeting.