

**MULTILATERAL TRADE  
NEGOTIATIONS  
THE URUGUAY ROUND**

RESTRICTED

MTN.GNG/19

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Group of Negotiations on Goods (GATT)

GROUP OF NEGOTIATIONS ON GOODS

Thirteenth meeting: 25 April 1989

1. The Group of Negotiations on Goods held its thirteenth meeting on 25 April 1989 under the Chairmanship of the Director-General.

I. Review of progress in the negotiations under Part I of the Punta del Este Declaration

2. Introducing this item, the Chairman said that it had been included to provide participants with an opportunity to comment on the state of the negotiations, but that the Group would no doubt agree that in the light of the decisions recently taken by the TNC and of the extensive review of progress carried out in its December and April meetings the need was now for intensive work in the Negotiating Groups and in capitals. The time remaining for negotiations was very short in relation to the size of the commitments to be fulfilled: for its part the secretariat would do its utmost to ensure the efficiency of the process.

II. Uruguay Round and the least-developed countries

3. The representative of Bangladesh, introducing his communication to the GNG dated 23 November 1988 (MTN.GNG/W/14/Rev.1) said that the proposals it contained were submitted by least-developed countries in pursuance of Section B(vii) of the Punta del Este Declaration and in accordance with paragraph 2(d) of the 1979 Decision of CONTRACTING PARTIES on differential and more favourable treatment of developing countries. The submission called for the incorporation of concrete measures for special and more favourable treatment for the LLDCs in any arrangements resulting from the Uruguay Round and for the advanced implementation in favour of LLDCs of all mfn concessions made by developed and other countries in the Round. It also called upon the CONTRACTING PARTIES to incorporate provisions to facilitate effective utilisation by LLDCs of remedial measures available in the GATT system. The Sub-Committee on Trade of Least-Developed Countries had unanimously urged that these proposals should be considered in the GNG and the Negotiating Groups. The representative therefore requested that the GNG should authorise its Chairman to transmit the proposals to the Chairpersons of all Negotiating Groups for consideration by the Groups as appropriate. The proposals would be further elaborated by least-developed countries, and new proposals tabled, in the near future.

4. The representative of Burma supported this statement and urged Negotiating Groups to give favourable consideration to these and to future proposals made on behalf of least-developed countries. He hoped that the GNG would also provide periodic opportunities for review of the situation of least-developed countries.

5. The Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Trade of Least-Developed Countries, recalling the letter he had addressed to the Chairman of the GNG on 7 November 1988 (MTN.GNG/W/15) concerning the problems and interests of least-developed countries in connection with the Uruguay Round, stressed the importance of faithful implementation of the provisions relating to least-developed countries in the Punta del Este Declaration. Though the most-favoured-nation rule was fundamental to the GATT system, to apply it mechanically in all circumstances could result in de facto discrimination against the poorest countries. This was the justification for extending specific advantages to them. Negotiating Groups should consider whether such advantages and special facilities for least-developed countries should now become part of the accepted rules of the system.

6. The Chairman proposed that the GNG should take note of the proposals in MTN.GNG/W/14/Rev.1 and of the statements made, and should authorise him to write to Chairpersons of Negotiating Groups drawing their attention to the proposals and statements. This would ensure that in all Groups there would be a good perception of the problems arising in the negotiations for least-developed countries. It would be for each Negotiating Group to consider the matter in the light of its own responsibilities. It was so agreed.

### III. Other business

7. The Chairman recalled that at its ninth meeting the GNG had agreed to review, at the first meeting in 1989, its decision to reconfirm the appointments of Chairpersons of Negotiating Groups. He expressed appreciation, on behalf of delegations and the secretariat, for the work done by Chairpersons and their substantive contribution to the successful conclusion of the Mid-Term Review. On the basis of consultations he proposed that the appointments of Chairpersons, as set out in MTN.GNG/W/9, should be reconfirmed until further notice. If for any reason a Chairperson were not in a position to continue to assume his responsibilities the matter would be raised in the GNG. It was so agreed.

8. The Chairman further proposed that the GNG should take note of the indicative list of the initial meetings of Negotiating Groups in 1989 which had been circulated at the time of the TNC meeting of 8 April. Negotiating Groups should thereafter have flexibility in fixing their own work schedules; as previously the work programme would be so ordered as to minimise the burden on delegations. It was so agreed.

9. The Chairman proposed that the date of 27 July 1989 should be provisionally set aside for the next meeting of the GNG. It was so agreed.