

**MULTILATERAL TRADE
NEGOTIATIONS
THE URUGUAY ROUND**

RESTRICTED

MTN.GNG/NG5/WGSP/3

29 November 1989

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Group of Negotiations on Goods (GATT)

Negotiating Group on Agriculture:

Working Group on Sanitary and Phytosanitary
Regulations and Barriers

FOURTH MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP ON SANITARY AND
PHYTOSANITARY REGULATIONS AND BARRIERS

Report by the Chairman to the Negotiating Group on Agriculture

1. The Working Group on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Regulations and Barriers met on 2-3 November 1989. The documents discussed by the Working Group included the Communication from the Cairns countries on health and sanitary regulations (NG5/W/112), the relevant portions of the United States proposal (NG5/W/118) and of the statement by Morocco (NG5/W/121), the Note by the Nordics countries on harmonization and notification (NG5/WGSP/W/7), and the statements by Brazil and Colombia on special and differential treatment (NG5/W/108 and NG5/W/110, respectively).
2. The Working Group's discussion focused on a number of major concepts including the possible harmonization of methodologies, risk assessment procedures, etc when harmonization of regulations per se was not practical; regional harmonization as a possible first step towards global harmonization; the recourse to expert advice in both informal consultations and formal dispute settlement procedures; the establishment of ad hoc consultations on particular problem issues; and the role of the international standard-setting bodies. It was agreed that other concepts, such as equivalency and acceptable risk levels, required further development and definition. Other issues discussed were notification procedures, regulations based on production and processing methods (PPMs) rather than on product characteristics, and the inclusion of moral or quality assurance concerns within the scope of the Working Group.
3. The need for technical assistance to developing countries was stressed, along with provisions of longer time frames for implementation of new measures, and compensation for trade lost as a consequence of unjustified sanitary and phytosanitary measures.
4. Representatives of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, the International Plant Protection Convention and the International Office of Epizootics participated in the meeting. They informed the Working Group of recent developments in their respective areas of concern, and of the technical assistance programmes available to developing countries.

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UR-89-0417