

**MULTILATERAL TRADE  
NEGOTIATIONS  
THE URUGUAY ROUND**

MTN.TNC/MIN(90)/1  
3 December 1990  
Special Distribution

Trade Negotiations Committee  
Meeting at Ministerial Level  
Brussels, December 1990

Original: French

ADDRESS BY MR. ROBERT URBAIN,  
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN TRADE OF BELGIUM

Your Majesty,

Your presence at the opening meeting of the Ministerial Conference of the Uruguay Round is further proof of your constant support for the international community's co-operation and conciliation efforts.

Your presence underlines the importance of achieving the objective of strengthening the multilateral trade system - an objective to which the delegations represented here in Brussels today remain deeply attached.

Your Majesty,  
Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

International trade is not solely an essential factor in economic growth. It must also contribute to social progress world-wide. By helping to meet the challenge of development inequalities, it should promote understanding and peace among nations.

The structure we are building must therefore be compatible with the universal values incumbent on our societies.

I am particularly happy to welcome to Brussels, at the heart of the European Community, the eminent delegations which bear the heavy responsibility of carrying out this task, the most ambitious and the most crucial one that has ever been envisaged, within a universal framework, for the future of trade.

For a number of reasons, Belgium has a special rôle to play in the fruitful conclusion of our work:

- . as host country, it is determined to do its utmost for its illustrious visitors;
- . as a founder member and also host country of the European Community - a major global partner - Belgium also wishes to contribute to the international opening up of the integration process in which it is participating;

GATT SECRETARIAT

./.

UR-90-0744

- . finally, Belgium, both by vocation and through necessity, has always been open to the outside. This has allowed Belgium to be one of the ten major world trading powers, despite its small size.

I would like to take the liberty, on behalf of this conference, of expressing to His Excellency Mr. Hector Gros Espiell, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uruguay and Chairman of the conference, our best wishes for success in carrying out his important task and to assure him of our full support. His great qualities as a diplomat constitute the best guarantee for the success of his work.

The same wishes naturally go to Ambassador Arthur Dunkel, Director-General of GATT and Chairman of the Trade Negotiations Committee, to whom I would like to pay a special tribute.

The discussions we shall be having this week represent the culmination of numerous efforts. What is more, they will mark the beginning of a new enterprise that we shall have to pursue patiently, resolutely and systematically, on the basis of the foundations laid here, once the Brussels meeting is over.

I thank you.