

**MULTILATERAL TRADE
NEGOTIATIONS
THE URUGUAY ROUND**

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BOLIVIA

Statement by Mr. Guido Cespedes Argandoña,
Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism

In the first place, I would like to express the thanks of the Bolivian delegation for the hospitality of the Kingdom of Belgium and to convey a personal greeting from President Jaime Paz Zamora to each and all of those present at this international event.

Bolivia became a contracting party to GATT only a few weeks ago. For this reason it has not taken an active part in the Uruguay Round. However, this does not mean that my country has not contributed substantively to the principal objective of the Round, which is trade liberalization. In the light of this objective, Bolivia, during the recent procedure for acceding to GATT, bound the whole of its customs tariff at the level of 40 per cent and also bound a large body of capital goods at 30 per cent. Moreover, since the beginning of the Round, Bolivia has autonomously reduced its tariffs by a percentage that is almost twice the target figure set on the occasion of the Mid-Term Review meeting at Montreal. Bolivia has also eliminated non-tariff barriers and restrictions.

For all these reasons, my country hopes that the measures indicated for effective and open trade liberalization will be given the appropriate credit and recognition in the results of this Round.

As Bolivia is convinced of the need for an updated and equitable international trading system, it attaches importance to a successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round. Various specific reasons explain this concern.

First: the conviction that new and improved conditions in the trade environment are a prerequisite for progress of the successful adjustment and stability programme that is being applied in Bolivia towards the stage of equitable economic growth with higher levels of productivity and competitiveness through the growth and diversification of investments and exports, with the capacity to generate productive employment on a vast scale and, as a result of this, the capacity to achieve a productive improvement in the social well-being of all Bolivians.

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Second: the hope that the progress made by Bolivia in trade policy matters can be translated into practical results through the opening up of new markets especially for the agricultural and agro-industrial products which Bolivia is promoting through alternative development programmes to bring about systematic replacement of substances that can be used to make drugs; in other words to guarantee attainment of the objectives established in the Bolivian campaign entitled "Coca for Development". These aims are of interest to the international community as a whole as the plan in question represents a practical response to the scourge of drug trafficking.

This is also true of the decision taken by the Government of Bolivia to institute an Ecological Moratorium for five years with objectives that are equally of international importance and benefit.

Third: the aim of establishing efficient management and achieving positive results in the less-developed countries as regards services and the transfer of technology; Bolivia believes that if these new subjects are to be included in GATT's sphere of analysis they must be accompanied by equitably differentiated treatment.

Fourth: the reinforcement and strengthening of democratic processes through the mechanisms and benefits of the market economy. To do this we should look to specific mechanisms operating at international level to ensure that the well-being of rural and urban workers in developing countries may at least approximate the levels prevailing in industrialized countries. We are also concerned that there should be equality of opportunity for our entrepreneurs.

We are disquieted by the difficulties facing the Round, even in its last hours, after four years of negotiation. However, we still have hopes of eventually reaching a satisfactory conclusion that will be expressed in terms of balanced results. For this to take place, the Round must offer the developing countries a definite and substantial improvement in all areas of market access, particularly agriculture, tropical products, textiles and clothing, and natural resource-based products.

I would emphasize that the greatest caution is needed in considering the inclusion of new areas such as services, intellectual property and investments in the purview of GATT, since the principle of special and more favourable treatment laid down in the General Agreement for the economically weaker countries is perhaps more clearly applicable in these areas than in others.