

**MULTILATERAL TRADE
NEGOTIATIONS
THE URUGUAY ROUND**

RESTRICTED

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Special Distribution

Trade Negotiations Committee

TRADE NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE

Twentieth Meeting: 20 December 1991

1. The Trade Negotiations Committee held its twentieth meeting at official level, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Arthur Dunkel.*
2. The Chairman then made the following statement.
3. "I call to order this meeting of the Trade Negotiations Committee at official level.
4. The purpose of this formal meeting of the TNC is to conclude the intensive consultations which, at the end of the Brussels meeting on 7 December 1990, Dr. Hector Gros Espiell, Chairman of the Committee at Ministerial level, asked me to carry forward "until the beginning of next year". He meant, of course, 1991. The fact that we have almost reached the beginning of 1992 speaks for itself ...
5. More specifically, the purpose of the meeting is to ask you to take note of the fact that before the end of today - 20 December - you will have available a complete and consolidated document bringing together the results of five years of effort. This document is the outcome both of intensive negotiation and of arbitration and conciliation: negotiation among you, the participants, and arbitration and conciliation by the Chairmen when it became clear that, on some outstanding points, this was the only way to put before you a complete, consolidated text. It represents the global package of results of this Round. Even more importantly, it offers us, for the first time, a concrete idea of the scope and scale of the benefits of broad-based liberalization and strengthened multilateral rules which are within our grasp. In short, a promise given, a promise kept.

* Before commencing the formal proceedings, the Chairman informed delegations that despite severe time constraints, it would be possible to make available the text of the Draft Final Act in the three official languages before the end of the same day. For the same reasons however, he further advised that there might be need for editorial rectifications to be made later in the text.

6. This achievement has been reached thanks to you, the negotiators, and to the dedication and determination of the Chairmen. All have worked virtually non-stop for this result over the past days and nights.

7. The document (MTN.TNC/W/FA), entitled "Draft Final Act Embodying the Results of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations", is ready, but for purely technical reasons - translation and printing - will be available in the three official languages of the GATT later this evening.

8. This Committee will meet again on 13 January, with a view to concluding the Uruguay Round. And since the text is not yet in your hands, I will adjourn this meeting as soon as I have concluded my statement. Between now and 13 January, I expect - indeed, I know - that the package in its totality will be given the most serious and urgent consideration, at the highest political levels, in your capitals.

9. In examining the Draft Final Act, governments will have to take into account a number of points:

(i) First, the text is comprehensive. It seeks to strike the best possible balance across the board of the long negotiating agenda of this Round. It addresses all areas of the negotiations as laid down by the Punta del Este Declaration. It nails down and captures the very substantial progress we have made since January this year. All these factors make this document much more important than the one we sent to Ministers in Brussels last December.

(ii) Second, however, the Final Act needs to be completed in one very important respect. It lacks the schedules of commitments that are still in the process of being negotiated in three major areas. I have in mind the results of the "Market Access Negotiations" in the various sectors of trade in goods; of the negotiations on specific commitments on internal support and export competition in agriculture; and of the negotiations on initial commitments on trade in services. These results will become available only on completion of the detailed and intensive negotiations in which delegations will have to engage early in the New Year. In this respect I would draw your attention to the statement of the Chairman of the Negotiating Group on Market Access which is being circulated in MTN.TNC/W/93.

10. Two further steps must be taken before the negotiations can be concluded. One is that the Group of Negotiations on Goods must conduct a final evaluation of the negotiations, in accordance with the mandate given by the Punta del Este Declaration. The other is that the entire body of agreements must be reviewed for legal conformity and internal consistency. This latter process is important and unavoidable - indeed, I am already aware that some technical corrections are required to ensure consistency in certain dispute settlement provisions. It should not, however, lead to substantive changes in the balance of rights and obligations established in the agreements.

11. All this means that our work from January onwards will therefore have to be based on a global approach. And this means that the negotiating groups under the GNG now cease to exist. One exception will be the Market Access Group, since it is charged with the specific task of providing an obvious missing element of the Final Act. The GNS, of course, will remain in place and continue its responsibilities including the conduct of the negotiations on initial commitments in services. I must, however, immediately add that, as Chairman of the TNC, I will continue to count on the assistance of the Chairmen in their personal capacity.

12. The Punta del Este Declaration clearly describes the Uruguay Round negotiations as a "single undertaking". As such, these negotiations are governed by the principle that nothing is final until everything is agreed.

13. Once again, I am deeply grateful to my fellow chairmen for their support, and for their expertise and courage in carrying out this task. My appreciation and thanks also go to all my colleagues in the Secretariat without whom all this would not have been possible. As to the results, no one is infallible, and I would not for a moment expect all participants to be fully content with all the decisions which I have had to make. Nevertheless, you chose this route yourselves, in full awareness of the possible consequences involved, and there is no going back. As I have repeatedly stressed, the document I have tabled today forms a single package, and it is as a package that it should be judged. Your evaluation should not therefore be hasty but well-considered and measured, looking to the future of the multilateral trading system and the opportunity it holds out for all our countries. I am confident that, if we continue to share the vision which brought us together in Punta del Este five years ago, your governments will judge the package favourably.

14. I know that the three weeks' break from now until the 13th January will not necessarily be a holiday. I would like to take this opportunity to convey my season's greetings to you and your families and express the wish that 1992 will go down in history as the year when the biggest of all multilateral trade negotiations were successfully concluded."