

**MULTILATERAL TRADE
NEGOTIATIONS
THE URUGUAY ROUND**

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SWITZERLAND

Statement by H.E. Mr. Pierre-Louis Girard,
Ambassador, Head of Delegation

After seven years of difficult talks, we have today concluded the negotiations under the Uruguay Round begun at Punta del Este in 1986.

As always after a long struggle, satisfaction at work well done is accompanied by fatigue and the memory of the countless difficulties encountered.

For Switzerland and for all the other 116 participants, the negotiations have been a major event in contemporary international economic cooperation, even a major event in international cooperation as a whole:

We have today decided:

- to set up a world trade organization;
- to reinforce considerably the rules of international trade, in particular, by establishing a stronger system for the settlement of disputes;
- to establish a general agreement on international trade in services;
- to conclude a series of agreements on trade in goods;
- to improve market access to a significant extent;
- finally, to conclude a major agreement on trade-related aspects of intellectual property.

In so doing, our governments have:

- undertaken the commitment to develop international trade and thereby promote more rational use of global resources;
- consolidated the system of international trade law and extended it to other international trade sectors;
- thus reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen multilateral cooperation, thereby contributing to political stability at the global level.

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The Uruguay Round negotiations took place in a global context of far-reaching changes at both the economic and political levels. The background to the last years of the Uruguay Round was a marked economic recession, even a crisis in some countries. This difficult economic and political situation, which none of us had foreseen in Punta del Este, led to increasing uncertainty among many governments regarding the path to be followed as far as trade policy was concerned.

This situation made it even more difficult to carry on negotiations which at the beginning we knew would not be easy. It led many to fear that there would be a break with the open trade policy followed since the Second World War and a return to trade practices and policies which would lead to and exacerbate crises and tension among nations. It made us fear that we were taking a backward step with regard to well being and global security.

In particular, this situation made us wonder whether we might not lose the opportunity offered to capitalize on the progress and successes in trade policy made since the creation of GATT in 1947 and whether we would not jeopardize fulfilment of the task which had become so obvious and urgent: laying the foundations for the multilateral trade system of global scope which the world would need in the 21st century.

Today, we have overcome those major risks. We have dispelled those fears. We have of course not done so definitively. We have probably not done so completely. But we have taken a decisive step in the long process which must continue.

Our task has not ended today. We know that much remains to be done. A certain number of issues in our negotiating programme remain open. We also know that some problems have only been touched upon. We must deal with them in depth in the new world trade organization and in future negotiations. Issues related to trade and the environment and to the problems of developing countries should be in the forefront of our concerns in this context.

But here and now one crucial task awaits us all at the national level. Our governments must start to put in motion the internal process that will allow them to undertake, in Marrakesh, the necessary commitments to implement the Uruguay Round. This task will not necessarily be easy. It will be vital.

At the conclusion of these long and difficult negotiations, on behalf of the Swiss Government, I wish to express the warmest thanks and gratitude to:

- First of all, Peter Sutherland, Chairman of the TNC, whose intelligence, personality and dynamism were decisive for the success of the final phase of the Uruguay Round.
- Arthur Dunkel, whose competence and commitment gave us the basis for today's success.
- Our colleagues who, throughout the process, helped us by acting as "friends" of the Chairman, the Chairmen of the negotiating groups, coordinators or other posts of interest to all.
- Finally, the GATT Secretariat - all its collaborators - who during these long years showed that it constituted an international public service corps which deserved to be cited as an example.

Our deepest gratitude goes to you all.