

**MULTILATERAL TRADE  
NEGOTIATIONS  
THE URUGUAY ROUND**

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Trade Negotiations Committee  
Meeting at Ministerial Level  
Marrakesh (Morocco), 12-15 April 1994

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**NICARAGUA**

Statement by H.E. Mr. Eduardo Belli Pereira  
Vice-Minister for Economy and Development

Nicaragua wishes to associate itself with those who have expressed their gratitude and also to congratulate the Director-General and his team, as well as the negotiators from all the contracting parties who, in the course of almost eight years of hard work and dedication, have enabled us to conclude these complex and ambitious negotiations.

May I also express my sincere thanks to His Majesty King Hassan II, the Government and people of Morocco, for all their hospitality, which is in the pure tradition of this country.

It is not by chance that this historic event is taking place in Morocco, a country that has been a bridge for ideas and civilizations.

Nicaragua participated actively in the negotiations in a constructive spirit and with the firm determination to contribute towards the consolidation of a strong legal basis for the multilateral trading system.

The culmination of the Uruguay Round is a very special occasion: it has meant the lowering of tariffs, a reduction in non-tariff measures and the inclusion of new sectors such as agriculture, textiles, services, investment and intellectual property in the new rules and disciplines which will give international trade greater transparency. There can be no doubt that it will provide an important boost for the global economy and should lead to the creation of thousands of jobs, foster trade and ultimately improve the living conditions of millions of people.

The opening up of new markets is of benefit to all, but for Nicaragua, as a country with a small economy, the most encouraging achievement has been the creation of the World Trade Organization, an aspiration which means more equal, just and transparent participation for its members.

We place our hopes in the results to be achieved by the Organization we have created today, an institution which for Nicaragua constitutes an essential cornerstone in the significant efforts towards trade diversification which we have undertaken at both the bilateral and regional levels. We are convinced of the importance of multilateral trade relations because they encourage global economic development and provide an appropriate method of combating protectionist trends.

The issues of trade, environment and working conditions, or the so-called social clause, are of great importance and there can be no doubt that they must be tackled, therefore, they should be dealt with honestly and not used as a pretext for new protectionist mechanisms.

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We must make it quite clear that any measure which attempts to make our countries less competitive, even if cloaked in ecological arguments or aimed at the improvement of working conditions, will increase poverty, and in developing countries poverty is the main enemy of the environment and working conditions; they would thus be anti-ecological and anti-social measures, which would distance us from the new economic order we are endeavouring to build and share.

We support the call for greater coherence in global economic policy-making. Open trade must be accompanied by a sufficient and timely flow of financial resources on favourable terms and of real investment towards developing countries. The immense effort involved in the structural adjustment programmes which the majority of us have been implementing requires the promotion of our exports, otherwise they will fail. We therefore already call upon the future Director-General of the World Trade Organization to maintain close coordination with the Bretton Woods institutions.

During recent years, Nicaragua has made far-reaching changes in its economic policy and our trade partners have recognized our unilateral opening up of trade; thus, we are amply meeting the commitment made in Montreal.

While saluting these achievements, we would like to draw attention to areas in which we believe it is necessary to do much more.

Although progress has been made in reducing domestic support programmes for agricultural products, in developed countries major subsidies still exist. They should gradually be eliminated so as to bring us closer to more equitable and distortion-free trade.

Domestic support designed to maintain a high standard of living at the cost of impoverishing the majority of the planet is intolerable and must not be allowed.

Domestic support - and international support I might add - can only be accepted and promoted in order to combat harmful ecological effects, encourage diversification whose objective is the elimination of crops used to make illegal drugs, or to allow countries such as ours, victims of natural disasters and socio-political conflict, to overcome the economic crisis.

We must seek new structures for cooperation in order to resolve urgent economic problems and we must orient our global economic institutions. As Mr. Sutherland said in his address to the World Economic Forum in January this year: "We cannot continue with a majority of the world's people excluded from participation in global economic management".

As already mentioned, we are convinced that, with the creation of the World Trade Organization, we have the opportunity to create a new, fairer, more equitable global economic order, with greater solidarity, cooperation and transparency, adapted to the realities, I might say the pressing needs, of the twenty-first century: an organization that is more capable of finding solutions to the problems facing us.

Nevertheless, we have an excellent basis, although the path ahead is long and difficult and we are facing great challenges. Let us make this final meeting the true beginning of the new international economic order.