

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

RESTRICTED

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GENERAL COUNCIL

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Annual Report (1995)

The present report has been prepared in pursuance of the Procedures for an Annual Overview of WTO Activities and for Reporting under the WTO (WT/L/105), and sets out the actions taken by the General Council since 1 January 1995.

In carrying out its tasks, the General Council has held 9 meetings since January 1995. The minutes of these meetings, which remain the record of the General Council's work, are contained in documents WT/GC/M/1-WT/GC/M/9.

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1. Matters arising from the report of the Preparatory Committee to the WTO

(a) Rules of Procedure for the Ministerial Conference and the General Council (WT/GC/M/1, 3)

At the General Council meeting on 31 January 1995, the Chairman recalled that the Preparatory Committee had approved the Rules of Procedure for the Ministerial Conference and the General Council in PC/IPL/9, and proposed that the General Council adopt these rules with the exception of the provisions concerning officers of the General Council and observer status for international intergovernmental organizations, and that he be authorized to hold informal consultations on these issues and to revert to them at a future meeting.

The General Council so agreed (WT/L/28).

At the General Council meeting on 3 April 1995, the Chairman proposed, on the basis of his consultations, that the General Council adopt the draft rules of procedure concerning officers of the General Council in WT/GC/W/5, and that he should hold further consultations on the rules concerning observer status for international intergovernmental organizations.

The General Council so agreed.

(b) Participation in meetings of WTO bodies by certain signatories of the Final Act eligible to become original Members of the WTO (WT/GC/M/1)

At the General Council meeting on 31 January 1995, the Chairman recalled that the Preparatory Committee had invited the General Council at its first meeting to adopt the decision concerning participation in meetings of WTO bodies by certain signatories of the Final Act eligible to become original Members of the WTO in PC/10, and proposed that the decision be adopted.

The General Council so agreed (WT/L/27).

(c) Participation of the United Nations, UNCTAD, IMF and the World Bank as observers at the first meeting of the General Council (WT/GC/M/1)

At the General Council meeting on 31 January 1995, the Chairman noted that the Preparatory Committee had recommended that, pending adoption of guidelines on observer status for international intergovernmental organizations, representatives of the United Nations, UNCTAD, IMF and World Bank be invited as observers at the first meeting of the General Council, and proposed that the General Council agree to the Preparatory Committee's recommendation.

The General Council so agreed.

(d) Transfer Agreement between GATT 1947, ICITO and the WTO (WT/GC/M/1)

At the General Council meeting on 31 January 1995, the Chairman recalled that the Preparatory Committee and the CONTRACTING PARTIES to GATT 1947 had approved a transfer agreement between the Preparatory Committee, the ICITO and the GATT CONTRACTING PARTIES to GATT 1947 (PC/9). In accordance with the Preparatory Committee's recommendation, he proposed that the General Council endorse the decisions taken by the Preparatory Committee and the CONTRACTING PARTIES to GATT 1947.

The General Council so agreed (WT/L/36).

(e) Avoidance of procedural and institutional duplication (WT/GC/M/1)

At the General Council meeting on 31 January 1995, the Chairman proposed that the General Council adopt the decision adopted earlier by the Preparatory Committee and the CONTRACTING PARTIES to GATT 1947 concerning the avoidance of procedural and institutional duplication (PC/11).

The General Council so agreed (WT/L/29).

(f) Finalization of negotiations on schedules on goods and services
(WT/GC/M/1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9)

At the General Council meeting on 31 January 1995, the Chairman recalled that the Preparatory Committee had forwarded to the General Council for adoption at its first meeting the decision concerning the finalization of negotiations on schedules on goods and services in PC/17, and proposed that the decision be adopted.

The General Council so agreed (WT/L/30).

At the General Council meeting on 3 April 1995, the Chairmen of the Councils for Trade in Goods and for Services reported on the finalization of negotiations on schedules of a number of governments and of their verification by the respective Councils.

The Chairman spoke.

The General Council approved the goods schedules of Chad and the Gambia¹ and agreed to extend the deadline in WT/L/30 for the submission of negotiated schedules for goods and services until 24 April 1995.

At the General Council meeting on 11 July 1995, the Chairman noted that the countries covered by the Decision in WT/L/30, namely Grenada, Papua New Guinea, St. Kitts and Nevis, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, had not yet concluded their process of accession. Since these governments were contracting parties to the GATT 1947 and had been granted observer status by the General Council, he proposed that they retain their observer status in WTO bodies until 31 December 1995, when the GATT 1947 was due to expire.

The General Council so agreed.

The Chairman then informed the General Council that a draft Protocol of Accession for the governments covered by the Decision in WT/L/30 was being prepared and would be circulated for consideration and approval by the General Council in due course.

The General Council took note of this information.

At the General Council meeting on 31 July 1995, the Chairman proposed approval of the goods schedule of Grenada and the goods and services schedules of Qatar, on the understanding that approval of these schedules did not mean that the process of accession of these countries had been completed since the issue of requirements for instruments of accession of all the countries covered by the Decision in WT/L/30 was still subject to consultations.

¹These countries were subsequently taken up by the General Council under point 2 - "Approval of schedules on goods and services pursuant to the Ministerial Decision in Favour of Least-Developed Countries".

The General Council approved the schedules on the understanding read out by the Chairman.

At its meeting on 15 November 1995, the General Council approved the goods and services schedules of St. Kitts and Nevis and Papua New Guinea. The General Council then considered draft Protocols of Accession and draft decisions on accession for Grenada (WT/GC/20), Papua New Guinea (WT/GC/W/21), Qatar (WT/GC/W/22) and St. Kitts and Nevis (WT/GC/W/23).

The General Council approved the texts of the draft Protocols of Accession (WT/L/97 - Grenada; WT/L/99 - Papua New Guinea; WT/L/101 - Qatar; and WT/L/95 - St. Kitts and Nevis) and, in accordance with the Decision-Making Procedures Under Articles IX and XII of the WTO Agreement contained in WT/L/93, adopted the decisions on accession (WT/L/96 - Grenada; WT/L/98 - Papua New Guinea; WT/L/100 - Qatar; and WT/L/94 - St. Kitts and Nevis).

The representative of Japan reiterated his Government's concern that Papua New Guinea's applied tariff on canned mackerel was in excess of the ceiling binding for this product in that country's schedule.²

The General Council took note of the statement.

At its meeting on 13 and 15 December 1995, the General Council approved the goods and services schedules of the United Arab Emirates.

The Chairman informed the General Council that consultations on a draft Protocol of Accession for the United Arab Emirates and a draft Decision authorizing it to accede on the terms set out in that Protocol were continuing and that the General Council would revert to this matter once they had been completed.

The General Council took note of this information.

(g) Requests for WTO accession under Article XII (WT/GC/M/1)

At its meeting on 31 January 1995, the General Council approved the Preparatory Committee's recommendation (PC/R, paragraph 35) that as and when requests for WTO accession under Article XII were made by states and separate customs territories for whom a GATT 1947 working party already existed, the existing working parties should continue their work as WTO accession working parties with standard terms of reference and their respective current chairpersons.

(h) Guidelines for appointment of officers to WTO bodies (WT/GC/M/1)

At the General Council meeting on 31 January 1995, the Chairman recalled that the Preparatory Committee had approved proposed guidelines for the appointment of officers to WTO bodies (PC/IPL/14) and had forwarded them to the WTO for further action. He proposed that the General Council approve the guidelines.

The General Council so agreed (WT/L/31).

²An earlier statement by Japan relating to this matter is carried under point 21 - "Papua New Guinea - Increase in applied tariff on canned mackerel".

(i) Adoption of the report of the Preparatory Committee (WT/GC/M/1)

At its meeting on 31 January 1995, the Chairman proposed that the General Council adopt the report of the Preparatory Committee to the WTO as a whole (PC/R and Corr.1), on the basis of certain understandings, which he read out, of what adoption of the report would mean.

The General Council adopted the report of the Preparatory Committee as a whole on the understanding indicated in the statement by the Chairman.

2. Approval of schedules on goods and services pursuant to the Ministerial Decision in Favour of Least-Developed Countries³ (WT/GC/M/4, 9)

Under the Marrakesh Ministerial Decision in Favour of Least-Developed Countries, these countries were given an additional period of one year from 15 April 1994 to submit their schedules as required under Article XI of the WTO Agreement.

At the General Council meeting on 31 May 1995, the Chairmen of the Councils for Trade in Goods and for Services reported on the verification by their respective Councils of a number of schedules that had been submitted pursuant to this Decision and which were being forwarded to the General Council for final approval.

The General Council approved the schedules of the twenty countries that had been forwarded to it for approval.⁴

The Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statement.

At the General Council meeting on 13 and 15 December 1995, the Chairman said that although the time-period provided in the Ministerial Decision had expired, the General Council might exceptionally consider for approval the goods and services schedules of the Solomon Islands which had recently been finalized.

The General Council approved the goods and services schedules of the Solomon Islands in Schedule CIIIXIV and S/P/2 respectively.

The Chairman said that WTO membership of the Solomon Islands would take effect on the 30th day following its date of acceptance of the WTO Agreement, providing that it accepted the Agreement within the two-year period provided for in Article XIV:1. He proposed that as with the other least-developed countries falling under the Marrakesh Decision that had not yet accepted the WTO Agreement⁵, the Solomon Islands be granted observer status until 31 December 1996, when the two-year period referred to in Article XIV:1 of the WTO Agreement expired.

³Approval of the goods schedules of Chad and the Gambia was taken up on 3 April under sub-point 1(f) - "Finalization of negotiations on schedules on goods and services".

⁴A list of the countries concerned, together with the relevant document references, was subsequently issued as WT/L/70.

⁵See point 44 - "Status of least-developed countries whose schedules on goods and services were approved by the General Council (WT/L/70) and of other non-voting participants falling under the Decision by the General Council in WT/L/27".

The General Council took note of this information and so agreed.

3. Headquarters Agreement (WT/GC/M/1, 4)

In July 1994, the Preparatory Committee for the WTO had approved Geneva as the seat of the WTO (PC/M/4, Annex 1) subject to a satisfactory conclusion of the negotiation of a Headquarters Agreement with the Swiss Authorities. In December 1994, the Committee had agreed that the mandate of the team negotiating on behalf of the WTO be extended, that a progress report be presented to the first meeting of the WTO's General Council, and that the overall results of the negotiations be transmitted for approval to a subsequent meeting thereof (PC/R, paragraph 16).

At the General Council meeting on 31 January 1995, Mr. Szepesi (Hungary) made a progress report concerning the negotiations on the Headquarters Agreement.

The General Council took note of the progress report and agreed that the overall results of the negotiations be submitted for approval at a future meeting.

At its meeting on 31 May 1995, the General Council considered a Note by the Negotiating Team (WT/GC/3) and two legal instruments negotiated between the Swiss authorities and the WTO Negotiating Team (WT/GC/1 and Add.1 and WT/GC/2).

The Chairman proposed that the General Council approve the two legal instruments and authorize him and the Director-General of the WTO to accept these legal instruments on behalf of the WTO.

The General Council so agreed (WT/L/69).

4. Establishment of committees and adoption of their terms of reference

(a) Committees on Trade and Development, Balance-of-Payments Restrictions, and Budget, Finance and Administration (WT/GC/M/1)

At the General Council meeting on 31 January 1995, the Chairman proposed that, pursuant to the requirement in Article IV:7 of the WTO Agreement, the General Council establish a Committee on Trade and Development, a Committee on Balance-of-Payments Restrictions, and a Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration.

The General Council so agreed.

The Chairman then proposed that the General Council adopt the terms of reference and membership of the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration in PC/IPL/2, the terms of reference for the Committee on Balance-of-Payments Restrictions in PC/IPL/3, and the terms of reference for the Committee on Trade and Development in PC/IPL/4, and take note of the accompanying statements or understandings to these texts referred to in PC/R, paragraph 40.

The General Council so agreed.

(b) Committee on Market Access (WT/GC/M/1)

At the General Council meeting on 31 January 1995, the Chairman said that there had been agreement to establish a Committee on Market Access, and proposed that the General Council establish

this Committee pursuant to Article IV:7 of the WTO Agreement.

The General Council so agreed.

The Chairman then proposed that the General Council adopt the terms of reference for the Committee on Market Access in PC/IPL/5, and take note of the accompanying statement or understanding to this text contained in PC/IPL/M/9, paragraphs 6, 7 and 8.

The General Council so agreed.

(c) Committee on Trade and Environment (WT/GC/M/1)

At the General Council meeting on 31 January 1995, the Chairman recalled that, pursuant to the Marrakesh Ministerial Decision on Trade and Environment (MTN.TNC/45(MIN), Annex II), a Committee on Trade and Environment should be established at the first meeting of the General Council, and proposed that the General Council establish this Committee.

The General Council so agreed.

(d) Terms of reference of the Committee on Agriculture (WT/GC/M/1)

At its meeting on 31 January 1995, the Chairman proposed that the General Council adopt the terms of reference for the Committee on Agriculture in PC/IPL/1, and take note of the accompanying statement or understanding referred to in PC/R, paragraph 40.

The General Council so agreed.

5. Composition of the Textiles Monitoring Body (WT/GC/M/1)

At the General Council meeting on 31 January 1995, the Chairman proposed, on the basis of consultations that had been held in the past month, that the General Council adopt the draft decision in WT/GC/W/4 concerning the composition of the TMB.

The General Council so agreed (WT/L/26).

The Chairman then proposed that the TMB be composed of members appointed by the following WTO Members: Brazil, Canada, the European Communities, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Indonesia, Norway, Pakistan and the United States.

The General Council so agreed.

The Chairman then invited the above-mentioned WTO Members to proceed to appoint their respective TMB members, and proposed that Mr. Szepesi (Hungary) be appointed as Chairman of the TMB for a three-year period.

The General Council so agreed.

6. Adoption of the Marrakesh Ministerial Decision on Notification Procedures (WT/GC/M/1)

At its meeting on 31 January 1995, the General Council adopted the Marrakesh Ministerial Decision on Notification Procedures, which Ministers had recommended for adoption by the Ministerial Conference.

7. Draft decision on continued application under the WTO Customs Valuation Agreement of invocations of provisions for developing countries for delayed application and reservations under the Customs Valuation Agreement 1979 (WT/GC/M/1)

At its meeting on 31 January 1995, the Chairman proposed that the General Council adopt the draft decision in WT/GC/W/1 providing for the continued application under the WTO Customs Valuation Agreement of invocations of provisions for developing countries for delayed application and reservations under the 1979 Customs Valuation Agreement.

The General Council so agreed (WT/L/38).

8. Recommendation by the Committee on Trade-Related Investment Measures (WT/GC/M/3)

At the General Council meeting on 3 April 1995, the Chairman drew attention to recommendations on the issue of the arrangements for notifications under Article 5.1 of the TRIMs Agreement by states and separate customs territories eligible to become original WTO Members that accepted the Agreement after its entry into force (G/TRIMS/2) and proposed that the General Council adopt the decision contained in that document.

The General Council so agreed (WT/L/64).

9. Agreement on Preshipment Inspection

- Establishment of the independent review entity under Article 4 of the Agreement (WT/GC/M/9)

At the General Council meeting on 13 and 15 December 1995, the Chairman drew attention to the draft decision on the establishment of the independent review entity under Article 4 of the Agreement on Preshipment Inspection (G/PSI/W/2/Rev.1).

The General Council adopted the decision (WT/L/125).

10. Approval of rules of procedure of subsidiary bodies

- (a) Councils for Trade in Goods, TRIPS and Services (WT/GC/M/4, 6, 8)

At its meeting on 31 May 1995, the General Council considered for approval, pursuant to Article IV:5 of the WTO Agreement, the draft rules of procedure for the Councils for Trade in Goods, TRIPS and Services in G/C/W/2, IP/C/W/2 and S/C/W/2 respectively.

The Chairman said that further work was required before these draft rules could be approved. Since the outstanding issues appeared to be of concern to all three sectoral Councils, he proposed that he hold consultations with the Chairmen of the respective Councils and that the General Council revert

to this matter at its next meeting.

The General Council so agreed.

At its meeting on 31 July 1995, the General Council considered the draft rules of procedure for meetings of the Council for Trade in Goods in G/C/W/2 and Add.1.

The Chairman spoke.

The General Council approved the rules of procedure for the Council for Trade in Goods in G/C/W/2 and Add.1, and agreed that since the same issue related to rule 33 was relevant to the rules of procedure of the Councils for TRIPS and Services, the solution adopted with respect to the Goods Council be referred to the other two sectoral Councils for their consideration.

At its meeting on 15 November 1995, the General Council considered the rules of procedure for meetings of the Councils for TRIPS and Services in IP/C/1 and S/L/15 which had recently been adopted by the respective Councils.

The General Council approved the rules of procedure for meetings of the Councils for TRIPS and Services in IP/C/1 and S/L/15 respectively.

(b) Committee on Trade and Development (WT/GC/M/8)

At its meeting on 15 November 1995, the General Council considered the rules of procedure for meetings of the Committee on Trade and Development in WT/COMTD/6 which had recently been adopted by that Committee.

The General Council approved the rules of procedure for meetings of the Committee on Trade and Development in WT/COMTD/6.

(c) Committee on Balance-of-Payments Restrictions (WT/GC/M/9)

At its meeting on 13 and 15 December 1995, the General Council considered the rules of procedure for meetings of the Committee on Balance-of-Payments Restrictions in WT/BOP/10 which had recently been adopted by that Committee.

The General Council approved the rules of procedure for meetings of the Committee on Balance-of-Payments Restrictions in WT/BOP/10.

11. Committee on Balance-of-Payments Restrictions⁶

(a) Programme of consultations for 1995 (WT/GC/M/1)

At the General Council meeting on 31 January 1995, the Chairman drew attention to the Committee's proposed programme of consultations for 1995 (WT/BOP/W/1).

The representative of Turkey spoke.

⁶On the designation of the Chairman of the Committee, see under point 45 - "Appointment of Officers of ...".

The General Council took note of the statement and of the information in WT/BOP/W/1.

(b) Consultations (WT/GC/M/5, 8, 9)

At the General Council meeting on 11 July 1995, the Chairman of the Committee introduced the Committee's reports on its consultations with South Africa (WT/BOP/R/1-BOP/R/224) and Egypt (WT/BOP/R/2-BOP/R/225) and, in connection with these countries' disinvocation of the relevant GATT provisions, recalled that every Member had the right to take measures under Articles XII and XVIII:B to safeguard its external financial position and its balance-of-payments in the circumstances provided for in these Articles. He then informed the General Council of the conclusions reached at the consultations with Hungary and Slovakia pending the submission of the reports thereon.

The General Council took note of the statement and adopted the reports in WT/BOP/R/1-BOP/R/224 and WT/BOP/R/2-BOP/R/225.

At the General Council meeting on 15 November 1995, the Chairman of the Committee introduced the Committee's reports on its consultations with Hungary (WT/BOP/R/3-BOP/R/226), the Slovak Republic (WT/BOP/R/4-BOP/R/227) and Turkey (WT/BOP/R/6-BOP/R/230), and informed the General Council of the conclusions reached at the consultations with Brazil and Sri Lanka pending the submission of the reports thereon.

The representative of Brazil spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements and adopted the reports in WT/BOP/R/3-BOP/R/226, WT/BOP/R/4-BOP/R/227 and WT/BOP/R/6-BOP/R/230.

At the General Council meeting on 13 and 15 December 1995, the Chairman of the Committee introduced the Committee's reports on its consultations with Brazil (WT/BOP/R/7-BOP/R/231), Sri Lanka (WT/BOP/R/8-BOP/R/233) and the Philippines (WT/BOP/R/9-BOP/R/233) and made an oral report on the Committee's consultation with India pending the submission of the report thereon.

The representative of the United States spoke.

The Council took note of the statement and adopted the reports in BOP/R/231-WT/BOP/R/7, BOP/R/232-WT/BOP/R/8 and BOP/R/233-WT/BOP/R/9.

(c) Disinvocation by Israel and South Africa (WT/GC/M/8)

At its meeting on 15 November 1995, the Chairman of the Committee informed the General Council that Israel and South Africa had recently communicated to the Committee their disinvocation of the balance-of-payments provisions of GATT 1994 (WT/BOP/N/3 and WT/BOP/N/5).

The General Council took note of the statement.

(d) Notes on meetings (WT/GC/M/8)

At the General Council meeting on 15 November 1995, the Chairman of the Committee drew attention to the Committee's discussion of its ongoing business reported in WT/BOP/R/5-BOP/R/229.

The General Council took note of the information in WT/BOP/R/5-BOP/R/229.

12. Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration⁷
- Reports (WT/GC/M/3, 4, 5, 8, 9)

At the General Council meeting on 3 April 1995, the Chairman of the Committee introduced the Committee's recommendations at its meetings on 16, 22 and 27 March (WT/BFA/2 - L/7626), pending the submission of a report thereon, and made an oral report on his own responsibility on the Committee's discussions concerning the Management Review.

The Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements, including the oral report made by the Budget Committee Chairman under his responsibility on the Management Review, and approved the Budget Committee's recommendations in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of document WT/BFA/2 - L/7626.

At the General Council meeting on 31 May 1995, the Chairman of the Committee introduced the Committee's reports in WT/BFA/3 - L/7628 and WT/BFA/4 -L/7629.

The representatives of Egypt and Switzerland, and the Chairman of the Committee and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements and approved the Budget Committee's specific recommendations in paragraphs 32, 33, 34 and 35 of its report in WT/BFA/3 - L/7628, and adopted the report. The General Council then approved the Budget Committee's specific recommendations in paragraphs 9, 13 and 15 of its report in WT/BFA/4 - L/7629, and adopted that report.

At the General Council meeting on 11 July 1995, the Chairman of the Committee introduced the Committee's recommendations at its meeting on 29 June (WT/BFA/5 and Add.1 - L/7631 and Add.1), pending the submission of a report thereon.

The General Council took note of the statement and approved the Budget Committee's specific recommendations in paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of document WT/BFA/5 and Add.1 - L/7631 and Add.1.

The Director-General spoke.

The General Council took note of the statement.

At the General Council meeting on 15 November 1995, the Chairman of the Committee introduced the Committee's reports in WT/BFA/6-L/7633, WT/BFA/7-L/7634 and WT/BFA/8-L/7649.

The representatives of Morocco, Zimbabwe, Egypt and Senegal, and the Chairman of the Committee and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements and adopted the Committee's report in WT/BFA/6-L/7633. The General Council then approved the Budget Committee's specific recommendations in paragraph 9 of its report in WT/BFA/7-L/7634 and adopted that report. The General Council then approved the Budget Committee's specific recommendations in paragraphs 14, 18, 22 and 39 of its report in WT/BFA/8-L/7649 and adopted that report.

⁷On the designation of the Chairman of the Committee, see under point 45 - "Appointment of Officers of ...".

At the General Council meeting on 13 and 15 December 1995, the Chairman of the Committee introduced the Committee's recommendation at its meeting on 30 November (WT/BFA/15 - L/7656), pending the submission of a report thereon.

The General Council took note of the statement and approved the Budget Committee's specific recommendation in paragraph 2 of document WT/BFA/15 - L/7656.

13. Customs unions and free-trade areas; regional agreements

(a) Establishment of a committee on regional trading arrangements (WT/GC/M/8, 9)

At its meeting on 15 November 1995, the General Council considered a communication from Canada (WT/GC/W/18) proposing that the Chairman of the General Council hold consultations on the possible establishment of a committee on regional trading arrangements.

The representatives of Canada, Japan, Hong Kong, Korea, Malaysia on behalf of the ASEAN countries, the United States, India, Australia, Argentina, Switzerland, the European Communities, Norway, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Pakistan, Egypt, Brazil, Poland, the Czech Republic, Tunisia, Turkey, Uruguay, Trinidad and Tobago, Chile, Hungary, Romania, Venezuela and Tanzania, and the Chairman of the Council for Trade in Goods, the Director-General and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements and authorized its Chairman to conduct informal consultations on the question of the establishment of a committee on regional trading arrangements.

At the General Council meeting on 13 and 15 December 1995, the Chairman proposed on the basis of his consultations that the General Council agree in principle to establish a committee on regional trading arrangements and that the terms of reference of the Committee and related matters be subject to further consultations early in 1996, following which a final decision would be taken.

The General Council so agreed.

(b) Terms of reference of working parties on agreements notified under Article XXIV of GATT 1947 (WT/GC/M/5)

At the General Council meeting on 11 July 1995, the Chairman recalled that this matter had been the subject of informal consultations conducted by the Chairman of the Council for Trade in Goods.

The Chairman of the Council for Trade in Goods spoke.

The General Council approved the terms of reference for these working parties together with the accompanying understandings as read out by the Chairman of the Council for Trade in Goods.

The representative of Uruguay on behalf of the Mercosur countries spoke.

The General Council took note of the statement.

(c) Enlargement of the European Union (WT/GC/M/1, 4)

At its meeting on 31 January 1995, the General Council considered a communication from the European Communities concerning its ratification on 1 January 1995 of the Treaty concerning the accession of Austria, Finland, Sweden and Norway to the European Union (L/7614), and an additional communication containing the formal notification of the ratification of the accession of Austria, Finland and Sweden to the European Union (WT/L/7).

The Chairman said it was his understanding from consultations held by the Secretariat that there was broad agreement for the General Council to establish a working party under Article XXIV of GATT 1994 to examine this matter under terms of reference that he read out.

The representatives of the European Communities, the United States, Japan, Canada, New Zealand, Indonesia on behalf of the ASEAN Members of the WTO, Australia, Chile, Switzerland, Uruguay, Mexico, Argentina, Turkey, Norway, Iceland, Hong Kong and Israel spoke.

The General Council agreed that further informal consultations be held on the terms of reference and that the matter be reverted to at a later stage, and authorized its Chairman to consult on this matter with the Chairman of the Council for Trade in Goods and the Chairmen of other WTO Councils, if necessary.

At its meeting on 31 May 1995, the General Council considered a communication from the European Communities (WT/L/67) in which the Community agreed to the prolongation of all rights held by WTO Members under Article XXVIII:3 of GATT 1994 until 31 December 1995, in respect of the Article XXIV:6 negotiations under way following the accession of Austria, Finland and Sweden to the European Union.

The representatives of Canada and Japan spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements and agreed that the six-month period referred to in Article XXVIII:3 would not be considered to expire prior to 31 December 1995.

(d) Hungary - Slovenia Free-Trade Agreement (WT/GC/M/5)

At its meeting on 11 July 1995, the representative of Hungary, also on behalf of Slovenia, informed the General Council that a Free-Trade Agreement between Hungary and Slovenia signed on 6 April 1994 had entered into force on 1 January 1995, and that the text of the Agreement would be submitted shortly. He indicated the readiness of both parties to submit the Agreement for examination under the relevant provisions of the GATT 1994 by a working party that might be established for this purpose.

The General Council took note of the statement.

14. Waivers in force as of 1 January 1995 (WT/GC/M/1)

At its meeting on 31 January 1995, the General Council considered an updated list of waivers in force on 1 January 1995 (WT/L/3), pursuant to the provision in footnote 1 to paragraph 1(b)(iii) of the GATT 1994 that the Ministerial Conference establish at its first session a revised list of waivers covered by this paragraph.

The General Council took note of the information contained in WT/L/3.

15. Decision-making procedures under Articles IX and XII of the WTO Agreement (WT/GC/M/8)

At the General Council meeting on 15 November 1995, the Chairman recalled that there had been some discussion concerning the manner in which the General Council should take decisions in relation to waivers or accessions to the WTO, and proposed, on the basis of consultations, that this issue be clarified in the form of a statement by the Chairman which he read out.

The representative of India said that his delegation would join in a consensus on the statement by the Chairman on an *ad referendum* basis and on the basis of certain understandings which he outlined.⁸

The General Council took note of the statement and agreed to the statement by the Chairman on WTO decision-making procedures under Articles IX and XII of the WTO Agreement (WT/L/93).

16. Waivers under Article IX of the WTO Agreement

(a) Harmonized System

(i) Bangladesh, Guatemala, Israel, Jamaica, Morocco, Sri Lanka, Trinidad and Tobago (WT/GC/M/6)

At its meeting on 31 July 1995, the General Council considered requests by Bangladesh (G/L/8), Guatemala (G/L/12), Israel (G/L/14), Jamaica (G/L/9), Morocco (G/L/11), Sri Lanka (G/L/10) and Trinidad and Tobago (G/L/13) for extensions of waivers previously granted in connection with their implementation of the Harmonized System.

The Chairman of the Council for Trade in Goods reported on the consideration of these requests by the Council.

The General Council took note of the report, approved the texts of the draft decisions (G/C/W/9/Rev.1-Bangladesh; G/C/W/13/Rev.1-Guatemala; G/C/W/15/Rev.1-Israel; G/C/W/10/Rev.1-Jamaica; G/C/W/12/Rev.1-Morocco; G/C/W/11/Rev.1-Sri Lanka; and G/C/W/14/Rev.1-Trinidad and Tobago), and agreed to submit them to a vote by postal ballot.

The representative of Argentina on behalf of the Informal Group of Developing Countries spoke.

The General Council took note of the statement.

The Decisions were adopted on 31 August 1995 (WT/L/80 - Bangladesh; WT/L/81 - Guatemala; WT/L/82 - Israel; WT/L/83 - Jamaica; WT/L/84 - Morocco; WT/L/86 - Sri Lanka; and WT/L/87 - Trinidad and Tobago).

(ii) Pakistan (WT/GC/M/8)

At its meeting on 15 November 1995, the General Council considered a request by Pakistan (G/L/6) for an extension of a waiver previously granted in connection with its implementation of the Harmonized System, and a draft decision to this effect (G/C/W/7/Rev.1).

⁸In a letter dated 17 November addressed to the Chairman, the representative of India indicated that his Government was willing to join in the consensus on the understanding that the decision was based on the elements outlined in his delegation's statement at the meeting and that this statement would form part of the record.

The Chairman of the Council for Trade in Goods reported on the consideration of this request by the Council.

The General Council took note of the report and, in accordance with the Decision-Making Procedures Under Articles IX and XII of the WTO Agreement in WT/L/93, adopted the decision (WT/L/102).

- (iii) Bangladesh, Bolivia, Guatemala, Jamaica, Morocco, Nicaragua, Sri Lanka and Trinidad and Tobago (WT/GC/M/9)

At its meeting on 13 and 15 December 1995, the General Council considered requests by Bangladesh (G/L/42), Bolivia (G/L/43), Guatemala (G/L/44), Jamaica (G/L/45), Morocco (G/L/56), Nicaragua (G/L/46), Sri Lanka (G/L/48) and Trinidad and Tobago (G/L/49) for extensions of waivers previously granted in connection with their implementation of the Harmonized System, and to the related draft decisions to this effect (Bangladesh-G/C/W/23, Bolivia-G/C/W/24, Guatemala-G/C/W/25, Jamaica-G/C/W/26, Morocco-G/C/W/35, Nicaragua-G/C/W/27, Sri Lanka-G/C/W/29 and Trinidad and Tobago-G/C/W/30).

The Chairman of the Council for Trade in Goods reported on the consideration of these requests by the Council.

The General Council took note of the report and, in accordance with the Decision-Making Procedures Under Articles IX and XII of the WTO Agreement in WT/L/93, adopted the decisions (WT/L/114-Bangladesh, WT/L/115-Bolivia, WT/L/116-Guatemala, WT/L/117-Jamaica, WT/L/118-Morocco, WT/L/119-Nicaragua, WT/L/120-Sri Lanka and WT/L/121-Trinidad and Tobago).

The representative of New Zealand spoke.

The General Council took note of the statement.

- (iv) Introduction of Harmonized System changes in WTO Schedules of Tariff Concessions on 1 January 1996 (WT/GC/M/9)

At its meeting on 13 and 15 December 1995, the General Council considered a draft decision (G/MA/W/4/Rev.1) to waive obligations under Article II of GATT 1994 for Members listed in the Annex to the draft decision in relation with the introduction of Harmonized System changes in WTO Schedules of Tariff Concessions on 1 January 1996.

The representative of Zambia requested that his country be added to the list of Members covered by the waiver, and the Chairman indicated that Japan wished to withdraw its name from the list. The Chairman of the Council for Trade in Goods reported on the consideration of this draft decision by the Council.

The General Council took note of the statement and of the report and, in accordance with the Decision-Making Procedures Under Articles IX and XII of the WTO Agreement in WT/L/93, adopted the decision in G/MA/W/4/Rev.1, as amended.

(b) Other waivers

(i) Senegal - Renegotiation of Schedule XLIX (WT/GC/M/6, 9)

At its meeting on 31 July 1995, the General Council considered a request by Senegal (G/L/7) for an extension of a waiver previously granted in connection with its renegotiation of its schedule, and a draft decision to this effect (G/C/W/8/Rev.1).

The Chairman of the Council for Trade in Goods reported on the consideration of this request by the Council.

The General Council took note of the report, approved the text of the draft decision (G/C/W/8/Rev.1) and agreed to submit it to a vote by postal ballot.

The Decision was adopted on 31 August 1995 (WT/L/85).

At its meeting on 13 and 15 December 1995, the General Council considered a request by Senegal (G/L/52) for an extension of a waiver previously granted in connection with its renegotiation of its schedule, and a draft decision to this effect (G/C/W/32).

The Chairman of the Council for Trade in Goods reported on the consideration of this request by the Council.

The General Council took note of the report and, in accordance with the Decision-Making Procedures Under Articles IX and XII of the WTO Agreement in WT/L/93, adopted the decision (WT/L/122).

(ii) Malawi - Renegotiation of Schedule LVIII (WT/GC/M/8)

At its meeting on 15 November 1995, the General Council considered a request by Malawi (G/L/24) for an extension of a waiver previously granted in connection with its renegotiation of its schedule, and a draft decision to this effect (G/C/W/19).

The Chairman of the Council for Trade in Goods reported on the consideration of this request by the Council.

The General Council took note of the report and, in accordance with the Decision-Making Procedures Under Articles IX and XII of the WTO Agreement in WT/L/93, adopted the decision (WT/L/103).

(iii) Zambia - Renegotiation of Schedule LXXVIII (WT/GC/M/9)

At its meeting on 13 and 15 December 1995, the General Council considered a request by Zambia (G/L/53) for an extension of a waiver previously granted in connection with its renegotiation of its schedule, and a draft decision to this effect (G/C/W/33).

The Chairman of the Council for Trade in Goods reported on the consideration of this request by the Council.

The General Council took note of the report and, in accordance with the Decision-Making Procedures Under Articles IX and XII of the WTO Agreement in WT/L/93, adopted the decision (WT/L/123).

(iv) United States - Caribbean Basin Recovery Act (WT/GC/M/8)

At its meeting on 15 November 1995, the General Council considered a request by the United States (G/L/25) for the renewal of its waiver concerning the Caribbean Basin Recovery Act (CBERA), and a draft decision to this effect (G/C/W/21/Rev.1).

The Chairman of the Council for Trade in Goods reported on the consideration of this request by the Council.

The General Council took note of the report and, in accordance with the Decision-Making Procedures Under Articles IX and XII of the WTO Agreement in WT/L/93, adopted the decision (WT/L/104).

The representative of Colombia spoke.

The General Council took note of the statement.

17. Accession matters

(a) Belarus (WT/GC/M/1⁹)

At its meeting on 31 January 1995, the General Council considered a communication from Belarus (WT/L/21) in which that Government requested accession to the WTO under Article XII and for which a GATT 1947 accession Working Party already existed.

The Chairman proposed, on the basis of the General Council's decision regarding such requests,¹⁰ that the existing Working Party on the Accession of Belarus continue its work as a WTO Accession Working Party.

The General Council so agreed.

The Chairman then invited Belarus, on behalf of the General Council, to attend meetings of the General Council and of other WTO bodies as an observer during the period in which the Working Party was carrying out its work.

(b) Ecuador (WT/GC/5, 6, 9)

In October 1992, the GATT 1947 Council had established a working party to examine Ecuador's request for accession to the GATT. Subsequently, in pursuance of the decision by the General Council on 31 January¹¹ regarding requests for WTO accession by governments for whom a GATT 1947 accession working party already existed, that working party had been transformed into a WTO Accession Working Party.

At the General Council meeting on 11 July 1995, the representative of Colombia, on behalf of the Group of Latin-American and Caribbean countries (GRULAC), proposed that in view of the

⁹Carried in the Minutes under "Requests for WTO accession under Article XII".

¹⁰See WT/GC/M/1, Item 4(g).

¹¹Idem.

recent completion of the work of the Working Party on Ecuador's accession, an additional meeting of the General Council be held that month to take a decision on Ecuador's accession.

The representatives of the United States, the European Communities and Ecuador (as an observer) spoke.

The Chairman said he would consult on the question of convening an additional meeting before the summer break to deal with this and other matters that had been raised at that meeting.

The General Council took note of the statements.

At its meeting on 31 July 1995, the General Council considered the Working Party's report (WT/L/77 and Corr.1, Add.1, Add.1/Corr.1 and Corr.2, and Add.2).

The representatives of Ecuador (as an observer), Venezuela, the European Communities, Malaysia on behalf of the ASEAN countries, Colombia and Argentina, and the Chairman spoke.

The representatives of a great majority of the Members, including Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, the European Communities, Cuba, Czech Republic, Egypt, Guatemala, Honduras, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Romania and Uruguay, among others, wished to be placed on record as welcoming and supporting the accession of Ecuador.

The General Council approved the text of the draft Protocol of Accession and the text of the draft decision, agreed that the draft decision be submitted to a vote by postal ballot, adopted the report of the Working Party in WT/L/77 and Corr.1, Add.1, Add.1/Corr.1 and Corr.2, and Add.2, and took note of the statements and of the expressions of support.

The Decision was adopted on 16 August 1995 (WT/ACC/ECU/5).

At its meeting on 13 and 15 December 1995, the General Council considered a communication from Ecuador (WT/ACC/ECU/6) requesting that the time-limit for acceptance in paragraph 7 of its Protocol of Accession be changed 31 March 1996.

The General Council agreed to the change (WT/ACC/ECU/7).

(c) Seychelles (WT/GC/M/5)

At its meeting on 11 July 1995, the General Council considered a communication from Seychelles (WT/ACC/SYC/1) concerning its interest in acceding to the WTO Agreement pursuant to Article XII.

The representative of Seychelles (as an observer) and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements, agreed to establish a working party to examine Seychelles's request, and authorized its Chairman to designate the Chairperson of the Working Party in consultation with representatives of Members and with the representative of Seychelles.

The representative of the European Communities spoke.

The General Council took note of the statement.

The Chairman then invited Seychelles, on behalf of the General Council, to attend meetings

of the General Council and of other WTO bodies as an observer during the period in which the Working Party was carrying out its work.

(d) Tonga (WT/GC/M/8)

At its meeting on 15 November 1995, the General Council considered a communication from Tonga (WT/ACC/TON/1) concerning its interest in acceding to the WTO Agreement pursuant to Article XII.

The representatives of Tonga (as an observer), New Zealand, Australia, the United States, Malaysia on behalf of the ASEAN countries, and India, and the Director-General spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements, agreed to establish a working party to examine Tonga's request, and authorized its Chairman to designate the Chairperson of the Working Party in consultation with representatives of Members and with the representative of Tonga.

The Chairman then invited Tonga, on behalf of the General Council, to attend meetings of the General Council and of other WTO bodies as an observer during the period in which the Working Party was carrying out its work.

(e) Vanuatu (WT/GC/M/5)

At its meeting on 11 July 1995, the General Council considered a communication from Vanuatu (WT/ACC/VAT/1) concerning its interest in acceding to the WTO Agreement pursuant to Article XII.

The representatives of Vanuatu (as an observer), the European Communities, Australia, New Zealand and Cyprus spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements, agreed to establish a working party to examine Vanuatu's request and authorized its Chairman to designate the Chairperson of the Working Party in consultation with representatives of Members and with the representative of Vanuatu.

The Chairman then invited Vanuatu, on behalf of the General Council, to attend meetings of the General Council and of other WTO bodies as an observer during the period in which the Working Party was carrying out its work.

(f) Viet Nam (WT/GC/M/1, 3)

At its meeting on 31 January 1995, the General Council considered a communication from Viet Nam (WT/L/1) concerning its interest in acceding to the WTO Agreement pursuant to Article XII.

The representatives of Viet Nam (as an observer), Australia, Indonesia on behalf of the ASEAN countries, India, Japan and New Zealand spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements, agreed to establish a working party to examine Viet Nam's request, and authorized its Chairman to designate the Chairperson of the Working Party in consultation with representatives of Members and with the representative of Viet Nam.

The Chairman then invited Viet Nam, on behalf of the General Council, to attend meetings of the General Council and of other WTO bodies as an observer during the period in which the Working Party was carrying out its work.

At its meeting on 3 April 1995, the Chairman informed the General Council that Mr. S. Ho (Korea) had agreed to serve as Chairman of the Working Party.

The General Council took note of this information.

- (g) Working Parties on accession to the WTO
- Chairmanships (WT/GC/M/3, 4, 5)

At the General Council meeting on 3 April 1995, the Chairman announced, on the basis of consultations, that the following had agreed to serve as Chairpersons of the respective working parties:

- Accession of Cambodia: Mr. A. Meloni (Italy)
- Accession of Lithuania: Mr. P. Witt (Germany)
- Accession of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Mr. B. Ekblom (Finland)
- Accession of Sudan: Mr. A. Lecheheb (Morocco)
- Accession of Uzbekistan: Mr. M. Ennaceur (Tunisia)
- Accession of Viet Nam: Mr. S. Ho (Korea)

The General Council took note of this information.

At its meeting on 31 May 1995, the Chairman informed the General Council that Mr. B. Ekblom (Finland) was no longer available to chair the Working Party on the Accession of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and that he was continuing consultations to find a new Chairman.

The General Council took note of this information.

At its meeting on 11 July 1995, the Chairman informed the General Council that Mr. Johannessen (Norway) had agreed to serve as Chairman of the Working Party on the Accession of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The General Council took note of this information.

18. Brazil - Import restrictive measures on automobiles (WT/GC/M/6)

At the General Council meeting on 31 July 1995, the representative of the United States expressed concern at a notification by Brazil (WT/BOP/N/4) of its intention to invoke Article XVIII:B of GATT 1994 with respect to quantitative restrictions on imports of automobiles imposed on 13 June.

The representatives of Korea, Japan, the European Communities, Mexico, Canada and Brazil, and the Chairman of the Committee on Balance-of-Payments Restrictions spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.¹²

¹²See also the subsequent statement by Brazil on 15 November under sub-point 11(b) - "Committee on Balance-of-Payments Restrictions - Consultations".

19. Brazil - Tariff increases (WT/GC/M/3)

At the General Council meeting on 3 April 1995, the representative of the United States expressed concern at tariff increases of up to 70 per cent recently announced by Brazil on a variety of durable consumer goods and automobiles.

The representative of Brazil spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

20. Japan-United States auto and auto parts issues (WT/GC/M/4, 5)

(a) United States' auto and autoparts issues: US unilateral measures

(b) Japan's automotive barriers and restrictive practices

At the General Council meeting on 31 May 1995, the Chairman said it was his understanding that delegations did not wish to enter into a discussion on these two matters at that meeting, but rather to have the General Council take note of statements made on these items at the meetings of the Council for Trade in Goods on 29 May 1995 and of the Dispute Settlement Body that morning.

The representatives of Argentina and Chile spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements, as well as of the statements made on these items at the meetings of the Council for Trade in Goods on 29 May and of the Dispute Settlement Body that morning.¹³

At its meeting on 11 July 1995, the General Council again considered this matter.

The representatives of Japan, the European Communities, Australia and Hong Kong, and the Director-General spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

21. Papua New Guinea - Increase in applied tariff on canned mackerel (WT/GC/M/4)

At the General Council meeting on 31 May 1995, the representative of Japan expressed concern over Papua New Guinea's recent increase of its applied tariff on canned mackerel in excess of the ceiling binding for this product in that country's Schedule.

The General Council took note of the statement.¹⁴

¹³See G/C/M/3, items 5 and 6, and WT/DSB/M/5, items 2 and 3.

¹⁴A subsequent statement by Japan relating to this matter was made on 15 November under sub-point 1(f) - "Finalization of schedules on goods and services".

22. United States - Imposition of import duties on automobiles from Japan under Sections 301 and 304 of the Trade Act of 1974 (WT/GC/M/4)

At the General Council meeting on 31 May 1995, the representative of the European Communities said that the Community wished to be joined in the consultations under Article XXII:1 of GATT 1994 requested by Japan¹⁵ concerning the United States' trade measures affecting imports from Japan of certain automobiles under Sections 301 and 304 of the US Trade Act of 1974.

The General Council took note of the statement.

23. United States - Investigation regarding Japan's photographic film market under Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974 (WT/GC/M/5)

At the General Council meeting on 11 July 1995, the representative of Japan expressed concern at the initiation of an investigation announced by the United States under Section 301 of its Trade Act of 1974 concerning Japan's market for photographic film.

The General Council took note of the statement.

24. United States - Proposed legislation to reinforce the commercial, economic and financial embargo on Cuba (WT/GC/M/5)

At the General Council meeting on 11 July 1995, the representative of Cuba expressed concern at a bill before the US Congress which proposed the reinforcement of the commercial, economic and financial embargo imposed on Cuba.

The representatives of the European Communities, Mexico and Colombia spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

25. United States - Proposed Iran Foreign Oil Sanctions Act (WT/GC/M/9)

At the General Council meeting on 13 and 15 December 1995, the representative of the European Communities expressed concern at a draft legislation before the US Congress which proposed sanctions on foreign companies exporting petroleum products or products destined for export to Iranian oil fields.

The General Council took note of the statement.

26. United States - Recent actions under Section 301 of the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988 (WT/GC/M/1, 3)

At the General Council meeting on 31 January 1995, the representative of Colombia expressed concern at an investigation recently initiated by the United States under Section 301 of its Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988 concerning the export régime for bananas from Colombia to the European Community.

¹⁵See WT/DSB/M/5.

The representatives of Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico and Hong Kong, and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

At its meeting on 3 April 1995, the General Council again considered this matter.

The representatives of Costa Rica, Colombia, the European Communities, Chile, Nicaragua and Venezuela spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

27. Negotiations on financial services (WT/GC/M/5)

At the General Council meeting on 11 July 1995, the representative of the European Communities said that the Community and its member States continued to attach importance to the liberalization of financial services within the WTO framework, and invited all participants in the negotiations to keep their best offers on the table on an m.f.n. basis in order to ensure the broadest possible participation in any agreement by the new deadline for the completion of the negotiations set for 28 July 1995.

The General Council took note of the statement.

28. Organization and working methods of WTO bodies (WT/GC/M/3)

At the General Council meeting on 3 April 1995, the representative of the European Communities said that while the customary practice of holding informal meetings on a case-by-case basis to discuss specific subjects was indispensable and facilitated decision-making at formal meetings, informal meetings at which the totality of the agenda proposed for a formal meeting was discussed were not worthwhile.

The representative of Egypt and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

29. Working language in the Technical Committee on Rules of Origin under the auspices of the World Customs Organization (WT/GC/M/1)

At the General Council meeting on 31 January 1995, the representative of Chile expressed concern over the lack of interpretation in Spanish at the first meeting of the Technical Committee on Rules of Origin of the World Customs Organization to be held in Brussels in February.

The representative of Argentina also on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean countries spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements and authorized its Chairman to convey the concerns expressed by Chile and Argentina to the Secretariat of the World Customs Organization.

30. Attendance at WTO meetings when introducing agenda items (WT/GC/M/7, 8)

At the General Council meeting on 30 October 1995, the representative of Argentina proposed that at its next meeting the General Council consider adopting a decision under which the Chairman of a WTO body would not take up an agenda item proposed by one or more delegations, if the delegation or delegations which proposed the item for consideration by that body were not present in the meeting room to introduce the item in question on their own behalf and to participate in any debate to which it might give rise.

The General Council took note of the statement.

At its meeting on 15 November 1995, the General Council considered a communication from Argentina on this matter (WT/GC/W/14).

The representatives of Argentina, India and Zimbabwe, and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

31. Procedures for an annual overview of WTO activities and for reporting under the WTO (WT/GC/M/8)

At its meeting on 15 November 1995, the General Council considered proposals submitted by the Chairman, following consultations with Chairpersons of other WTO bodies and with the Secretariat, for an annual overview of WTO activities and for reporting under the WTO (WT/GC/W/15/Rev.1).

The representatives of the United States, the European Communities and India spoke.

The General Council adopted the procedures for an annual overview of WTO activities and for reporting under the WTO (WT/L/105) on the understanding that the Chairman would consult with the Chairman of the TPRB on the question of holding the annual overview of WTO activities at the same time as the overview of developments in international trade and the trading system required under the Trade Policy Review Mechanism.

32. Guidelines for the scheduling of meetings (WT/GC/M/8)

At its meeting on 15 November 1995, the General Council considered guidelines for the scheduling of meetings (WT/GC/W/16) which had been drawn up following intensive consultations with delegations and with a view to ensuring the efficient conduct of meetings of WTO bodies.

The Chairman said that the DSB, the BOP Committee and the TMB had particular requirements for meetings and that it should therefore be understood that while all efforts would be made to schedule meetings of these bodies in accordance with the guidelines in WT/GC/W/16, the necessary flexibility would be applied in instances where this would not be possible. He added that in scheduling WTO meetings, the timetable of meetings of other intergovernmental organizations in Geneva, such as UNCTAD, would be taken into account as far as possible bearing in mind the workloads of the respective organizations.

The General Council took note of the statement and adopted the guidelines for the scheduling of meetings (WT/L/106).

33. Programme of meetings of the General Council (WT/GC/M/1, 3)

At the General Council meeting on 31 January 1995, the Chairman proposed that the General Council meet in principle on a quarterly basis, and that more frequent meetings be held if a sufficient number of matters for consideration so required. He announced his intention to hold informal consultations on this matter.

The General Council took note of the statement.

At the General Council meeting on 3 April 1995, the Chairman said it appeared from his consultations that the suggestion he had made at the meeting on 31 January was acceptable, namely that the General Council should, in principle, meet quarterly and that more frequent meetings would be convened if required.

The General Council took note of this information.

34. Procedures for the circulation and derestriction of WTO documents (WT/GC/M/5, 6, 9)

At the General Council meeting on 11 July 1995, the Chairman said that while substantial progress had been made in informal consultations in defining proposals on these procedures, there were still some outstanding points which required further clarification, and the General Council would therefore have to revert to this item in the near future.

The General Council took note of the statement.

At its meeting on 31 July 1995, the General Council again considered this matter.

The Chairman spoke.

The General Council agreed that delegations be given more time in order to finalize their positions and that further consultations be conducted on this matter as well as on guidelines for arrangements on relations with non-governmental organizations, and that both these matters be reverted to at its next meeting.

At its meeting on 13 and 15 December 1995, the General Council again considered this matter.

The Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statement and agreed to revert to this matter at its next meeting.

35. Arrangements for effective cooperation with other intergovernmental organizations

(a) United Nations (WT/GC/M/3, 8)

In adopting the report of the Preparatory Committee (PC/R) on 31 January, the General Council had endorsed paragraph 54 of the report, which stated that "The Preparatory Committee saw no grounds for formal institutional links between the WTO and the United Nations, although the need for the establishment of cooperative ties between the two organizations was underscored; this latter aspect could be taken up by the WTO."

At the General Council meeting on 3 April 1995, the Chairman reported on his informal consultations concerning the arrangements for cooperation to be established between the two organizations, and proposed that the General Council confirm to the Secretariat the request of Members that it work out with the United Nations a global arrangement¹⁶ which would be based on the same effective working relationship that had existed in the past between the GATT and the United Nations.

The General Council so agreed.

At its meeting on 15 November 1995, the General Council considered a communication from the Director-General (WT/GC/W/10) informing Members of a global arrangement that had been agreed between the two Secretariats through an exchange of letters signed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and by himself.

The representative of the United States and the Director-General spoke.

The General Council took note of the communication from the Director-General in WT/GC/W/10 and of the statements.

(b) IMF and World Bank (WT/GC/M/3, 5)

At its meeting on 3 April 1995, the Chairman informed the General Council that consultations on the question of the relationship between the WTO and the IMF and the World Bank were being conducted by Mr. Rossier (Switzerland) and that the General Council would revert to this matter at a later date.

The General Council took note of this information.

At the General Council meeting on 11 July 1995, Mr. Rossier read out a set of "proposed conclusions" resulting from his consultations which, following their approval by the General Council, would be addressed to the Director-General as a basis to seek an agreement on the future relationship between the WTO and the IMF and World Bank.

The representative of the European Communities and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council approved the set of "proposed conclusions" read out by Mr. Rossier and took note of the statements.

The Director-General and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

(c) WIPO (WT/GC/M/9)

At its meeting on 13 and 15 December 1995, the General Council considered a proposed Agreement on cooperation between WIPO and the WTO in document IP/C/6 which had recently been approved by the Council for TRIPS.

The Chairman proposed that the General Council approve the text of the proposed Agreement, and agree to delegate authority to the Council for TRIPS to take such additional action as necessary

¹⁶Some discussion relating to this matter is carried under sub-point 37(a) - "Relationship between the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/GATT and the WTO".

on the part of the WTO so that the Agreement could enter into force as scheduled on 1 January 1996.

The General Council so agreed.

36. Guidelines for arrangements on relations with non-governmental organizations pursuant to Article V:2 of the WTO Agreement (WT/GC/M/5, 6, 9)

At the General Council meeting on 11 July 1995, the Chairman said that while considerable progress had been made in informal consultations on this matter, further consultations were needed to finalize a draft which could be submitted to the General Council for approval.

The representative of the European Communities and the Chairman of the Committee on Trade and Environment spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

At its meeting on 31 July 1995, the General Council again considered this matter.

The Chairman spoke.

The General Council agreed that delegations be given more time in order to finalize their positions and that further consultations be conducted on this matter as well as on procedures for the circulation and derestriction of documents, and that both these matters be reverted to at its next meeting.

At its meeting on 13 and 15 December 1995, the General Council again considered this matter.

The representatives of the United States, the European Communities, Mexico, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Canada and Australia, and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements and agreed to revert to this matter at its next meeting.

37. International Trade Centre UNCTAD/GATT

(a) Relationship between the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/GATT and the WTO (WT/GC/M/3)

At the General Council meeting on 3 April 1995, the Chairman reported on his informal consultations concerning the relationship of the WTO with the ITC, and proposed that it be agreed that the ITC should be operated jointly by the WTO and UNCTAD, the latter acting on behalf of the United Nations. He also proposed that the Budget Committee's recommendations concerning the ITC, as adopted by the General Council,¹⁷ be conveyed to the United Nations and that negotiations start without delay. This budgetary aspect was part of the overall package to be negotiated by the Secretariat on the cooperative ties with this organization.¹⁸

¹⁷See WT/BFA/2, paragraph 1, and WT/GC/M/3, item 8.

¹⁸On the cooperative arrangements with the United Nations, see under sub-point 35(a) - "Arrangements for effective cooperation with other intergovernmental organizations - United Nations".

The representative of Argentina and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements and agreed with the Chairman's proposals.¹⁹

(b) Report of the Joint Advisory Group (WT/GC/M/8)

At its meeting on 15 November 1995, the General Council considered the report of the Joint Advisory Group of the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/GATT on its twenty-eighth session (ITC/AG(XXVIII)/150 and Annex I).

The Chairman of the Group introduced the report. The representatives of the European Communities, Switzerland, Argentina on behalf of the Informal Group of Developing Countries, and Canada, and the Executive Director of the International Trade Centre, the Director-General and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements and adopted the report.

38. Training Activities (WT/GC/M/9)

At the General Council meeting on 13 and 15 December 1995, the Chairman drew attention to a report on training activities in document WT/L/108. Although under the GATT 1947 such reports were considered by the Council, this matter was not included on the General Council's agenda because training, as part of the general technical cooperation activities of the WTO, had been fully discussed in the Committee on Trade and Development.

The representatives of Zimbabwe, Switzerland, Argentina on behalf of the informal group of developing countries, and Egypt, and the Director-General and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

39. Ratification of the WTO Agreement

(a) Cameroon (WT/GC/M/6)

At its meeting on 31 July 1995, the representative of Cameroon informed the General Council that Cameroon had recently completed its domestic procedures for ratification of the WTO Agreement and that the instrument of ratification would be deposited with the Secretariat shortly.

The General Council took note of the statement.

(b) Egypt (WT/GC/M/4)

At its meeting on 31 May 1995, the representative of Egypt informed the General Council that Egypt had completed its domestic procedures for ratification of the WTO Agreement and that a ratification instrument had been deposited with the Secretariat that day.

¹⁹At the General Council meeting on 15 November, in connection with the discussion on the arrangements concluded between the WTO and the United Nations, the Director-General announced that the "International Trade Centre UNCTAD/GATT" would now be the "International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO."

The General Council took note of the statement.

(c) Poland (WT/GC/M/4)

At its meeting on 31 May 1995, the representative of Poland informed the General Council that Poland had completed its ratification process for the WTO Agreement and the Multilateral Trade Agreements annexed thereto, and that the Agreement would enter into force for Poland on 1 July 1995.

The General Council took note of the statement.

(d) Switzerland (WT/GC/M/3)

At its meeting on 3 April 1995, the representative of Switzerland informed the General Council that the way was now clear for Switzerland to modify its domestic legislation to implement the Uruguay Round Agreements and that this would be done at the latest by end-May, shortly after which Switzerland would be in a position to deposit its instrument of ratification.

The General Council took note of the statement.

(e) Turkey (WT/GC/M/1)

At its meeting on 31 January 1995, the representative of Turkey informed the General Council that Turkey's National Assembly had adopted a law providing for ratification of the WTO Agreement effective on 1 January 1995, and that a formal instrument of ratification would shortly be submitted to the Secretariat.

The representative of the European Communities spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

40. 1996 Ministerial Conference

(a) Venue of the Conference (WT/GC/M/1)

At the General Council meeting on 31 January 1995, the representative of Singapore recalled that her Government had made an offer at the Marrakesh Ministerial meeting to host the first Ministerial Conference of the WTO, and said that consultations since then with members of the GATT and WTO had shown an overwhelming support for Singapore's offer, thus providing sufficient basis for a consensus decision on this matter, which her Government sought at the present meeting.

The representatives of Indonesia also on behalf of Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, Philippines, and Thailand, Malaysia on behalf of the Informal Group of Developing Countries, Hong Kong, the European Communities, Mexico, Morocco on behalf of the African Group, Argentina on behalf of Latin American and Caribbean countries, Canada, Australia, Korea, Japan, India, Hungary, Pakistan and Turkey spoke.

The General Council welcomed the invitation of the Government of Singapore, agreed by consensus that the first Ministerial Conference would be held in Singapore, and authorized its Chairman to hold consultations on the precise dates for the Conference.

The representative of Singapore spoke.

(b) Preparations for the Conference (WT/GC/M/6)

At the General Council meeting on 31 July 1995, the Chairman said he intended to discuss with delegations after the summer break issues relating to the organization of the Ministerial Conference, which would cover the question of the preparatory mechanism to be set up as well as the person to chair such a mechanism, and offered his initial views on this subject.

The General Council took note of the statement.

41. Salaries and pensions of WTO staff (WT/GC/M/7)

At its meeting on 30 October 1995, the General Council considered the question of salaries and pensions of WTO staff. In so doing, the General Council had before it a communication from the Chairman of the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration addressed to the General Council Chairman (WT/GC/W/11) which attached a draft decision on this subject by the Budget Committee Chairman on his own responsibility, as well as a proposal by the General Council Chairman, also on his own responsibility, in WT/GC/W/12.

The representatives of Tunisia, Colombia, Japan, Malaysia on behalf of the ASEAN countries, Switzerland, Norway, Canada, Spain, Australia, Italy, New Zealand, Trinidad and Tobago, Argentina, India, Morocco, the United Kingdom, Hong Kong, Brazil, Chile, Germany, Senegal, Egypt, Korea, the United States and Belgium, and the Chairman of the WTO Staff Council, the Chairman of the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration, the Director-General and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements and adopted the decision in WT/GC/W/12 proposed by the Chairman (WT/L/91).

42. Office of Director-General and Deputy Directors-General (WT/GC/M/2)

(a) Appointment of a new Director-General

(b) Creation of additional post of Deputy Director-General

At its meeting on 24 March 1995, the General Council considered the appointment of a successor to the outgoing Director-General, Mr. Peter Sutherland.

The Chairman proposed that Members agree, following the consensus reached in consultations held over the past nine months, to formally appoint Mr. Renato Ruggiero as the Director-General of the WTO for one four-year term effective as from 1 May 1995.

The General Council so agreed.

The Chairman then reported on certain understandings that had been reached during the consultations, including that the next Director-General would be a non-European and that an additional post of Deputy Director-General be created. He then proposed that consultations be undertaken by the Chairman of the General Council, at the appropriate time, on devising more effective procedures for future appointments of a Director-General.

The General Council took note of the understanding reached that the next Director-General would be a non-European, invited the WTO Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration to take up the question of the establishment of another post of Deputy Director-General and report to the General Council on this matter, taking into account the interests and concerns of some regions,

particularly the African regions on the question of future appointments, and authorized the Chairman to undertake consultations at the appropriate time on the development of procedures for the appointment in future of a Director-General.

The representatives of Morocco on behalf of the African countries, Korea, Turkey, the European Communities, Switzerland, France, Bangladesh on behalf of the least-developed countries, Brazil on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean countries, Canada and Italy, and the Chairman of the Budget Committee and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

43. Observer status

(a) Governments²⁰

(i) Requests from a number of States and separate customs territories (WT/GC/M/1)

At its meeting on 31 January 1995, the General Council considered requests for observer status from Ecuador (WT/L/4), Panama (WT/L/5), Qatar (WT/L/8), Bulgaria (WT/L/10), Mongolia (WT/L/12), Sudan (WT/L/13), Separate Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu (WT/L/14), Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (WT/L/16), Russian Federation (WT/L/17), Republic of Croatia (WT/L/18), Ukraine (WT/L/19) and Republic of Belarus (WT/L/21).

The Chairman said that a number of these Governments, namely, Croatia, Ecuador, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Qatar, Russian Federation, Sudan and Ukraine, were in the process of negotiating their accession to the WTO. In accordance with the customary practice of the CONTRACTING PARTIES to GATT 1947, under which governments whose accession process had been formally begun were invited automatically, and as a matter of courtesy, to attend meetings as observers, he proposed that these and other governments whose accession process had been formally begun, be invited to attend as observers meetings of the General Council and its subsidiary bodies, as well as those of the DSB, the TPRB and the Ministerial Conference, with the exception of meetings of the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration.²¹

The General Council so agreed.

The Chairman then proposed that, on the basis of the decision just taken, Cambodia and Uzbekistan, which were currently in the process of negotiating accession to the WTO, also be invited to attend meetings of the General Council and other WTO bodies as observers. On the same basis, he proposed that action on the request by Viet Nam (WT/L/15) be taken in conjunction with that Government's request for accession. He then noted that, under the Decision on finalization of negotiations on goods and services schedules, which the General Council would adopt later at that meeting, Grenada, Papua New Guinea, St. Kitts and Nevis and the United Arab Emirates would be given until 31 March 1995 to finalize and submit their negotiated schedules. Until that date, therefore,

²⁰See also point 44 - "Status of least-developed countries whose schedules on goods and services were approved by the General Council (WT/L/70) and of other non-voting participants falling under the Decision by the General Council in WT/L/70", and sub-point 1(b) - "Participation in meetings of WTO bodies by certain signatories of the Final Act eligible to become original Members of the WTO".

²¹On the same basis, the General Council subsequently welcomed as observers Albania, Algeria, Armenia, Estonia and Latvia, whose GATT 1947 accession working parties had been transformed into WTO accession working parties.

these governments should also be invited to attend meetings of the General Council and other WTO bodies as observers.²²

The General Council so agreed.

The Chairman then noted that Bulgaria, Mongolia, Panama and the Separate Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu had all expressed an intention to accede to the WTO. Under rules of procedure to be agreed by the General Council later at that meeting, requests for observer status from governments should normally be accompanied by a description of the governments' current economic and trade policies, as well as any intended future reforms of these policies. However, the above governments were in the process of acceding to the GATT 1947 and had provided such information in that context, and could therefore be assumed to have fulfilled that requirement. Accordingly, he proposed that the General Council agree to also grant these governments observer status.

The General Council so agreed.

(ii) Oman (WT/GC/M/3)

At its meeting on 3 April 1995, the General Council considered a request from Oman (WT/L/33) for observer status in the General Council and its subsidiary bodies, and granted the request.

The representative of Oman (as an observer) spoke.

The General Council took note of the statement.

(iii) China (WT/GC/M/5)

At its meeting on 11 July 1995, the General Council considered a request from China (WT/L/72) for observer status in the General Council and its subsidiary bodies, and granted the request.

The representatives of Malaysia on behalf of the ASEAN countries, Pakistan, India, Argentina, the European Communities, New Zealand, Australia, Uruguay, Colombia on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean countries, Egypt, Jamaica, Brazil, Chile, Switzerland, Mexico, Israel, Canada, Nigeria, Japan, Korea, Hungary, Peru, Norway, Tunisia, Hong Kong, Poland, Côte d'Ivoire, the Slovak Republic, Turkey, Czech Republic, Cuba, Romania, Cyprus, Iceland and China (as an observer) spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

²²As indicated under sub-point 1(f), the General Council agreed on 11 July that Grenada, Papua New Guinea, Qatar, St Kitts and Nevis and the United Arab Emirates which were covered by the Decision on the finalization of negotiations on schedules on goods and services (WT/L/30) and which had not concluded their process of accession, retain their observer status in WTO bodies until 31 December 1995.

(b) International intergovernmental organizations²³ (WT/GC/M/3, 4, 5, 6, 8)

At its meeting on 3 April 1995, the Chairman informed the General Council that pending adoption of criteria and conditions for observer status for international intergovernmental organizations, *ad hoc* arrangements had been approved at an informal Heads of Delegations meeting on 16 March, which he read out, to enable organizations whose work was relevant and useful for various WTO bodies to attend their meetings as observers in the meantime. On the basis of these *ad hoc* arrangements, he proposed that the United Nations, UNCTAD, IMF, World Bank, FAO, WIPO and OECD be invited to attend that meeting and that they also be invited to the next meeting of the General Council.

The General Council so agreed.

At the General Council meeting on 31 May 1995, the Chairman said it was his understanding that pending agreement on guidelines for observer status for international organizations, the United Nations, UNCTAD, IMF, World Bank, FAO, WIPO and OECD would be invited to the next meeting of the General Council, in accordance with the *ad hoc* arrangements approved on 16 March.

The General Council took note of this information.

At the General Council meeting on 11 July 1995, the Chairman recalled his earlier understanding on this matter.

The General Council took note of this information.

At the General Council meeting on 31 July 1995, the Chairman recalled his earlier understanding on this matter.

The General Council took note of this information.

At the General Council meeting on 15 November 1995, the Chairman recalled his earlier understanding on this matter.

The General Council took note of this information.

44. Status of least-developed countries whose schedules on goods and services were approved by the General Council (WT/L/70) and of other non-voting participants falling under the Decision by the General Council in WT/L/27 (WT/GC/M/5)

At the General Council meeting on 11 July 1995, the Chairman proposed that the least-developed countries whose schedules had been approved in May²⁴ pursuant to the Marrakesh Decision in Favour of Least-Developed Countries but which had not yet accepted the WTO Agreement, be granted non-voting participant status in WTO bodies until 31 July 1995 on the basis of the Decision on participation in meetings of WTO bodies by certain signatories of the Final Act eligible to become original Members of the WTO (WT/L/27). After that date, when non-voting participant status would no longer exist, he proposed that the least-developed countries be granted observer status until 31 December 1996,

²³See also sub-point 1(c) - "Participation of the United Nations, UNCTAD, IMF and World Bank as observers at the first meeting of the General Council".

²⁴See point 2 - "Approval of schedules on goods and services pursuant to the Ministerial Decision in Favour of Least-Developed Countries".

when the two-year period referred to in Article XIV:1 of the WTO Agreement expired. The countries concerned were: Angola, Burundi, Chad, the Gambia, Guinea, Haïti, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Zaire²⁵.

With regard to the other non-voting participants covered by the Decision in WT/L/27 that would not have ratified the WTO Agreement by 31 July, he proposed that they be granted observer status in WTO bodies until 31 December 1996. The countries concerned were: Benin, Bolivia, Cameroon, Congo, Fiji, Liechtenstein, Madagascar, Nicaragua and Niger.

The General Council so agreed.

45. Appointment of Officers of the Dispute Settlement Body, Trade Policy Review Body, Council for Trade in Goods, Council for Trade in Services, Council for Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, the Committee on Trade and Development, Committee on Balance-of-Payments Restrictions, Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration and the Committee on Trade and Environment (WT/GC/M/1, 3, 9)

At the General Council meeting on 31 January 1995, the outgoing Chairman of the GATT 1947 CONTRACTING PARTIES, Mr. Szepesi (Hungary), proposed the following nominations for appointments to WTO bodies:

- Dispute Settlement Body: Mr. D. Kenyon (Australia)
- Trade Policy Review Body: Vice-Chairman: Mr. Lecheheb (Morocco)
- Council for Trade in Goods: Mr. M. Endo (Japan)
- Council for Trade in Services: Mr. C. Manhusen (Sweden)
- Council for Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights:
Mr. S. Harbinson (Hong Kong)
- Committee on Balance-of-Payments Restrictions: Mr. P. Witt (Germany)
- Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration: Mr. J.-M. Metzger (France)
- Committee on Trade and Development: Mr. S. Haron (Malaysia)
- Committee on Trade and Environment: Mr. J. Sanchez Arnau (Argentina)

The General Council agreed with the nominations proposed.

At its meeting on 3 April 1995, the General Council approved the nomination of Mr. O. Londoño (Colombia) as Chairman of the Trade Policy Review Body.

At the General Council meeting on 13 and 15 December 1995, the Chairman said that in accordance with the guidelines for appointment of officers to WTO bodies (WT/L/31), he was in a position to submit the following slate of names to the General Council for approval:

- General Council: Mr. W. Rossier (Switzerland)
- Dispute Settlement Body: Mr. C. Lafer (Brazil)
- Council for Trade in Goods: Mr. S. Narayanan (India)
- Council for Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights:
Mr. W. Armstrong (New Zealand)
- Council for Trade In Services: Ms. L. Bautista (Philippines)
- Trade Policy Review Body: Mrs. A. Anderson (Ireland)

²⁵The Solomon Islands was added to this list following approval of its schedules at the General Council meeting on 13 and 15 December 1995 (see under point 2).

- Committee on Trade and Environment: Mr. J. Sanchez Arnau (Argentina)
- Committee on Trade and Development: Mr. N. Benjelloun-Touimi (Morocco)
- Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration: Mr. J. Yokota (Japan)
- Committee on Balance-of-Payments Restrictions: Mr. P. Witt (Germany)

The General Council approved the appointments.

46. Election of Chairman (WT/GC/M/1)

At the General Council meeting on 31 January 1995, Mr. K. Kesavapany (Singapore) was unanimously elected to the Chair.

47. Review of WTO activities²⁶ (WT/GC/M/9)

48. Annual overview of developments in international trade and the trading system²⁶ (WT/GC/M/9)

At its meeting on 13 and 15 December 1995, the General Council conducted a review of WTO activities in pursuance of the Decision concerning procedures for the overview of WTO activities and for reporting under the WTO (WT/L/105), as well as an overview of developments in international trade and the trading system as required under paragraph G of the Trade Policy Review Mechanism. In doing so, the General Council considered annual reports from WTO bodies (WT/GC/W/25, WT/CTE/W/17, WT/L/107, WT/L/90 and WT/L/92) and an annual report by the Director-General (WT/TPR/OV/1).

The Chairpersons of the respective WTO bodies introduced the reports submitted by those bodies.

The General Council took note of the reports from the WTO bodies in documents WT/GC/W/25, WT/CTE/W/17, WT/L/107, WT/L/90 and WT/L/92, and took note of the statements.

The Chairman of the Trade Policy Review Body and the Director-General then spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

The General Council then heard statements on both these items from representatives²⁷. It then agreed that the review of WTO activities and the overview of developments in international trade and the trading system had been conducted.

²⁶At the Chairman's suggestion the matters under points 47 and 48 were taken up together and the discussion thereof is reflected accordingly in the Minutes of the meeting.

²⁷These statements were subsequently circulated as documents in the WT/GC(95)/ST/- series.