

GENERAL COUNCIL

Annual Report (2002)

Addendum

At its meeting in February 2003, the General Council agreed that its report to the Fifth Session of the Ministerial Conference would consist of the Annual Report for 2002 together with a brief update report which would describe developments since December 2002.

The present Addendum to the Annual Report of 2002 sets out the actions taken by the General Council since the beginning of 2003. The General Council has held 5 meetings since December 2002. The minutes of these meetings, which remain the record of the General Council's work, are contained in documents WT/GC/M/78 – 82.¹

The following subjects are included in this Addendum:

1. Matters resulting from the Fourth Session of the Ministerial Conference.....	4
(a) Trade Negotiations Committee – Reports.....	4
(b) Committee on Trade and Development – Reports by the Chairman of the Committee on Trade and Development in Special Session on Special and Differential Treatment in Pursuance of Paragraph 44 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration and Paragraph 12.1 of the Doha Ministerial Decision on Implementation-Related Issues and Concerns.....	4
(c) Committee on Agriculture – Implementation-Related Issues - Report to the General Council.....	6
(d) Committee on Customs Valuation – Report on the Identification and Assessment of Practical Means to Address Members' Concerns Regarding Accuracy of Declared Values Pursuant to Paragraph 8.3 of the Doha Ministerial Decision on Implementation-Related Issues and Concerns	6
(e) Marrakesh Ministerial Decision on Measures Concerning the Possible Negative Effects of the Reform Programme on Least-Developed and Net Food-Importing Developing Countries – Follow-up to the report of the Inter-Agency Panel on Short-Term Difficulties in Financing Normal Levels of Commercial Imports of Basic Foodstuffs	7
(f) Council for TRIPS	7
(i) <i>Implementation of Paragraph 6 of the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health</i>	7

¹ WT/GC/M/82 to be issued.

(ii)	<i>Report by the Chairman on Examination of Scope and Modalities for Non-Violation and Situation Complaints under Article XXIII of GATT 1994</i>	9
(g)	Work Programme on Electronic Commerce – Reports from Subsidiary Bodies and on the Dedicated Discussions on Cross-Cutting Issues under the auspices of the General Council.....	9
(h)	Work Programme on Small Economies – Reports	10
(i)	Review of Progress on the Implementation Issues Referred to WTO Bodies under the Decision of 14 November 2001 on Implementation-Related issues and Concerns	10
(j)	Review of progress on development-related issues of the Doha Work Programme.....	10
(k)	Negotiations on Improvements and Clarifications of the DSU - Extension of Timeframe.....	11
(l)	Reports of the Working Groups on the Relationship between Trade and Investment, the Interaction between Trade and Competition Policy, and Transparency in Government Procurement, and of the Council for Trade in Goods on Trade Facilitation Timeframe.....	11
(m)	Reports of the Working Groups on Trade, Debt and Finance, and on Trade and Transfer of Technology.....	12
(n)	Committee on Trade and Environment – Report Pursuant to Paragraphs 32 and 33 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration.....	12
(o)	Rules of Origin – Harmonization Work Programme	12
(p)	Implementation and Adequacy of Technical Cooperation and Capacity-Building Commitments in the Doha Ministerial Declaration – Report by the Director-General Pursuant to Paragraph 41 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration	13
(q)	Issues affecting Least-Developed Countries.....	14
(i)	<i>Report by the Director-General Pursuant to Paragraph 43 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration</i>	14
(ii)	<i>Report by the Director-General on Implementation of the Commitment by Ministers to Facilitate and Accelerate Accession of LDCs</i>	14
2.	Review of the exemption provided under paragraph 3 of GATT 1994	14
3.	Proposal to remove and avoid inconsistencies in the texts of the WTO Agreements.....	15
4.	Accession matters.....	15
(a)	Bhutan.....	15
(b)	Ethiopia.....	15
(c)	Iran	16
(d)	Yemen.....	16
5.	Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration	16
(a)	Reports	16
(b)	Doha Development Agenda Global Trust Fund – Situation as at 30 June 2003.....	17
6.	Waivers under Article IX of the WTO Agreement.....	18
(a)	Kimberley Process Certification Scheme for Rough Diamonds.....	18

(b)	Introduction of Harmonized System 1996 changes into WTO Schedules of Tariff Concessions	18
(i)	<i>Argentina, El Salvador, Israel, Malaysia, Morocco, Pakistan, Panama, Thailand and Venezuela</i>	18
(c)	Transposition of Schedule into the Harmonized System	19
(i)	<i>Sri Lanka</i>	19
7.	Preparations for the Fifth Session of the Ministerial Conference	19
(a)	Administrative matters.....	19
(i)	<i>Annual report of the General Council to the Ministerial Conference</i>	19
(ii)	<i>Attendance of observers</i>	19
(iii)	<i>Attendance of Non-Governmental Organizations</i>	21
(iv)	<i>Election of Officers for the Fifth Session</i>	22
(v)	<i>Administrative arrangements</i>	23
(vi)	<i>Extension of deadline for registration of participants to the Fifth Session of the Ministerial Conference</i>	23
(b)	Updates to the 2002 Annual Reports	23
(c)	Draft Ministerial Text	24
(d)	Poverty Reduction – Sectoral Initiative in Favour of Cotton.....	25
(e)	Communication from the Kyrgyz Republic.....	25
8.	Sixth Session of the Ministerial Conference	26
9.	Coherence in Global Economic Policy-Making.....	26
10.	Trade in Textiles and Clothing	27
(a)	Developing Members' concern about potential reduction in market (quota) access in 2004	27
(b)	Anti-dumping actions in the area of textiles and clothing – Proposal for a specific short-term dispensation in favour of developing Members following full integration of the sector into GATT from January 2005.....	27
11.	Ongoing improvements to the services provided by the Secretariat to Members	27
12.	Possibility of a summer break prior to the Fifth Ministerial Conference	27
13.	Closure of the WTO premises during the meeting of the G-8 in Evian	28
14.	Traffic congestion in the WTO premises	28
15.	International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO	28
16.	WTO Pension Plan.....	29
(a)	Management Board of the WTO Pension Plan.....	29
17.	Appointment of officers to WTO bodies	29
18.	Chairmanships of the WTO bodies under the TNC	31
19.	Election of Chairperson.....	31

1. Matters resulting from the Fourth Session of the Ministerial Conference

(a) Trade Negotiations Committee – Reports (WT/GC/M/78, 80, 81)

At the General Council meeting on 10 February 2003, the Chairman of the Trade Negotiations Committee reported on the TNC's meeting on 4-5 February.

The representative of Botswana (on behalf of the ACP Members) spoke.

The General Council took note of the report by the TNC Chairman and of the statement.

At the General Council meeting on 15 May 2003, the Chairman of the Trade Negotiations Committee reported on the TNC's activities since the last report to the General Council in February.

The representative of Cuba and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the report by the TNC Chairman and of the statements.

At the General Council meeting on 24-25 July 2003, at the Chairman's suggestion, the report by the Chairman of the Trade Negotiations Committee was taken up together with the draft Ministerial text (in Point 7(c) below), and the discussion is reflected accordingly in this Report and in the Minutes of the meeting.

(b) Committee on Trade and Development – Reports by the Chairman of the Committee on Trade and Development in Special Session on Special and Differential Treatment in Pursuance of Paragraph 44 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration and Paragraph 12.1 of the Doha Ministerial Decision on Implementation-Related Issues and Concerns (WT/GC/M/78, 80, 81)

At its meeting on 10 February 2003, the General Council considered a report from the CTD in Special Session in document TN/CTD/7.

The Chairman of the CTD in Special Session, in introducing the Committee's report, noted that the report consisted of a factual summary of proceedings of the Special Session since July 2002, as well as the following recommendations on the way forward: (i) that the General Council take note of the agreement in principle that had been reached on 12 agreement-specific proposals, and revert to the question of the adoption of these proposals at a later date; (ii) that the General Council "provide clarification, as it considers appropriate, regarding Paragraph 44 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration and Paragraph 12 of the Decision on Implementation-Related Issues and Concerns, and the means to give effect to the mandate"; and (iii) that in the intervening period, the CTD in Special Session suspend further work. He went on to provide a brief background to these recommendations.

The representatives of Pakistan, Bangladesh (on behalf of the LDCs), Cuba, Brazil, China, Paraguay, European Communities, Morocco (on behalf of the African Group), Kenya, Venezuela, Canada, Argentina, Indonesia, Colombia, Uganda, Hungary, Japan, Switzerland, United States, Australia, Norway, Haiti, Korea and India, and the Chairman of the CTD in Special Session and the Chairman spoke.

Following a proposal by the Chairman, the General Council agreed to suspend consideration of this item, and to revert to it following the lunch break.

Upon resumption of the discussion, the representatives of Bangladesh (on behalf of the LDCs), Chile, Morocco (on behalf of the African Group), European Communities, Cuba, India, Japan, Hungary, Venezuela, New Zealand and Kenya, and the Director of the Council and TNC Division and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council agreed to the Chairman's proposal that the General Council revert to this matter, after having taken note of the report and of the statements, and invite its incoming Chairman, in coordination with the Chairman of the CTD in Special Session, to undertake consultations immediately on how to take this very important matter forward.

At the General Council meeting on 15 May 2003, the Chairman reported that on the basis of the consultations he had carried out, he had put forward a paper on 7 April (JOB(03)/68) outlining what he believed to be the best way to enable Members to move forward on this issue. Based on the approach suggested in that paper, and following careful examination of all the agreement-specific proposals, he had circulated on 5 May an informal listing of these proposals in three broad categories (Job 3404), which he went on to describe. He indicated his intention to start an intensive series of informal consultations with Members as from the following week, which would begin with the Agreement-specific proposals listed in Category I. He also indicated, *inter alia*, the understandings on the basis of which he would request relevant WTO bodies to address the agreement-specific proposals listed in Category II of his paper, and that he would be writing to the Chairpersons of these bodies specifically in this regard during the course of the week. He then indicated that he would make a further progress report to the General Council at its next meeting.

The representatives of Kenya, India, Botswana, Zambia, Morocco and Bangladesh (on behalf of the LDCs), and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the report by the Chairman and of the statements, and also that the Chairman would submit a further progress report to the General Council at its next meeting.

At the General Council meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the Chairman reported, *inter alia*, on the progress of his consultations with Members at the level of Heads of Delegation on the Agreement-specific proposals listed in Category I of Job 3404, in which he had been assisted by a group of Heads of Delegation acting as "Friends of the Chair". He announced his intention to work intensively with delegations immediately following the short summer break in order to make further progress towards a meaningful package for the Cancún Ministerial Conference. He invited Chairpersons of the bodies to which the Agreement-specific proposals in Category II had been referred to make brief reports on the status of work on these issues in their respective bodies.

The Chairpersons of the Special Session of the Committee on Agriculture, the Special Session of the Dispute Settlement Body, the Special Session of Council for Trade in Services, the Negotiating Group on Rules, the Council for TRIPS, the Committee on Safeguards, the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and the Committee on Trade-Related Investment Measures, and the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture reported on the status of work on the Agreement-specific proposals relevant to the work of their respective bodies.

The representatives of Kenya, Zambia, United States, Cuba, Botswana, Malaysia, European Communities, Paraguay, India and Norway, and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements and of the reports by the General Council Chairman and the Chairpersons of subsidiary bodies in documents TN/AG/11, TN/DS/9, TN/S/12, G/AG/17, G/SG/64, G/SPS/27, G/L/638, Job(03)/171, TN/RL/7-G/L/640, and that the reports would be forwarded to the Ministerial Conference.

- (c) Committee on Agriculture – Implementation-Related Issues - Report to the General Council (WT/GC/M/81)

Ministers at Doha approved a recommendation that the Committee on Agriculture, following its regular meeting in September 2002, should report to the General Council on its examination of possible means to improve the effectiveness of the implementation of the Marrakesh Ministerial Decision regarding the least-developed and net food-importing developing countries; and on the implementation of Article 10.2 of the Agriculture Agreement. Ministers also endorsed a decision by the Agriculture Committee to keep under review the administration of tariff rate quotas and the submission by Members of addenda to their notifications (WT/MIN(01)/17, paragraph 2). The Agriculture Committee last reported to the General Council on these matters in October 2002.

At its meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the General Council considered a further report on these matters from the Committee on Agriculture in G/AG/16, which also provided a follow-up to the recommendation of the Inter-Agency Panel on Short-Term Difficulties in Financing Normal Levels of Commercial Imports of Basic Foodstuffs regarding the establishment of an ex ante financing mechanism aimed at food importers.

The representative of Egypt on behalf of the Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture introduced the report.

The General Council took note of the statement and of the report of the Committee on Agriculture in G/AG/16, approved the Committee's recommendations in paragraph 19 of the report, and took note that the report would be forwarded to the Ministerial Conference.

- (d) Committee on Customs Valuation – Report on the Identification and Assessment of Practical Means to Address Members' Concerns Regarding Accuracy of Declared Values Pursuant to Paragraph 8.3 of the Doha Ministerial Decision on Implementation-Related Issues and Concerns (WT/GC/M/81)

Ministers at Doha recognized the legitimate concerns expressed by the customs administrations of several importing Members on the accuracy of the declared value, and directed the Committee on Customs Valuation to identify and assess practical means to address such concerns and to report to the General Council by the end of 2002 at the latest (WT/MIN(01)/17, paragraph 8.3). In December 2002, the General Council considered a report from the Committee on Customs Valuation, and authorized the Committee to continue its work under the existing mandate and to report back to the General Council once its work had been completed.

At the General Council meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the Chairman said, *inter alia*, that he had been informed by the Chairman of the Committee that, despite intensive efforts in recent days, the Committee had been unable to conclude its work, and that as agreed by the General Council in December, the Committee would report to the General Council once its work had been completed.

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

- (e) Marrakesh Ministerial Decision on Measures Concerning the Possible Negative Effects of the Reform Programme on Least-Developed and Net Food-Importing Developing Countries – Follow-up to the report of the Inter-Agency Panel on Short-Term Difficulties in Financing Normal Levels of Commercial Imports of Basic Foodstuffs (WT/GC/M/80)

At its meeting on 15 May 2003, the General Council heard a report by the Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture on the Committee's consideration of the Inter-Agency Panel's recommendation regarding an ex-ante financing mechanism aimed at food importers.

The representative of Egypt on behalf of the Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture reported, *inter alia*, that the Committee had agreed to convene a Roundtable with the task: (i) to explore, in the context of the Marrakesh Decision, the need for a safety net to be established to assist the LDCs and NFIDCs during the reform process leading to greater liberalization of trade in agriculture, including an examination of objective criteria and trigger mechanisms to determine a need; and (ii) to identify, in the light of (i) above, appropriate mechanisms within the framework of the Marrakesh Decision, taking into account their technical feasibility, as well as their financial and institutional implications on potential donors and beneficiaries. The following organizations had been invited to nominate experts to participate in the Roundtable: FAO, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), International Grains Council, IMF, UNCTAD, WFP and the World Bank. Members were also invited to participate in the Roundtable, which was scheduled to take place on 19 May.

The representatives of Cuba, Kenya, Djibouti, Morocco and Tunisia spoke.

The General Council took note of the report by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture and of the statements, and invited the Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture to keep the General Council informed of progress in this regard following the Committee's meeting in June.²

- (f) Council for TRIPS

- (i) *Implementation of Paragraph 6 of the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health (WT/GC/M/78, 82)*

At its meeting on 10 February 2003, the General Council considered this matter.

The Chairman of the Council for TRIPS reported on the Council's further consideration of this matter, and requested that, under the circumstances, the General Council consider providing an additional period for further deliberations in capitals and consultations in Geneva. His aim was to have something more concrete to report to Members by the end of the TRIPS Council meeting scheduled for the week of 17 February.

The Chairman spoke.

² A further follow-up report on this matter is carried under Point 1(c) – Committee on Agriculture – Implementation-Related Issues – Report to the General Council.

The General Council took note of the progress report by the Chairman of the TRIPS Council on the status of his further consultations, and agreed to suspend discussion on this item and to revert to it at a reconvened meeting to be held shortly.³

At its meeting on 26-27 and 30 August 2003, the General Council again considered this matter.

On 27 August, the Chairman of the Council for TRIPS reported on developments in recent consultations on this matter.

The Chairman proposed, in the light of the report, that the General Council suspend its discussion on this item and agree to reconvene at short notice with a view to taking action on the basis of any recommendations that would be forthcoming from the Council for TRIPS.

The General Council took note of the statements and so agreed.

At the resumed meeting on 30 August, the Chairman of the Council for TRIPS reported on the Council's consideration of this matter, and said that the Council had approved a draft Decision in document IP/C/W/405 and had forwarded it to the General Council for adoption. The TRIPS Council had also approved forwarding to the General Council the text of a statement, contained in Job(03)/177, to be read out by the Chairman of the General Council prior to adoption of the draft Decision.

The Chairman spoke, and invited any Members that wished to make statements with respect to paragraph 1(b) of the Draft Decision to do so.

The representatives of Israel; Hong Kong, China; Chinese Taipei, Singapore, Mexico, Turkey, Korea and Poland (also on behalf of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Slovak Republic and Slovenia) spoke.

The Chairman then read out for the record the statement forwarded to him by the TRIPS Council, contained in Job(03)/177 and filled in the 11 Members to be mentioned in the last paragraph of that statement.

The General Council took note of the statements, and in the light of the statement read out by the Chairman, and in accordance with the Decision-Making Procedures under Articles IX and XII of the WTO Agreement agreed in November 1995 (WT/L/93), adopted the draft Decision in document IP/C/W/405.⁴

The Director-General and the representatives of Morocco (on behalf of the African Group), Mauritius, Cuba, Brazil, South Africa, Djibouti, Barbados, Kenya, Argentina, Venezuela, India, Jamaica, Guinea, El Salvador, Benin, Nicaragua, Uganda, Canada, Indonesia, Japan, China, Norway, Switzerland, Senegal, Costa Rica, Uruguay, Ecuador, Philippines, Malaysia, Chile, Australia, Bangladesh, Colombia, Rwanda, Zambia, Czech Republic, Sri Lanka, United States, Slovak Republic, European Communities and Nigeria, and the Holy See (as an Observer), and the Chairman of the TRIPS Council and the Chairman spoke.

³ In a communication dated 3 March 2003 (JOB(03)/46) the Chairman informed Members that for reasons indicated therein, and in light of a letter addressed to him from the Chairman of the TRIPS Council, the General Council meeting of 10 February would be considered closed unless any delegation informed him by 5 March of its wish to have the General Council reconvene in the coming days. No such communication was received, and the meeting was considered closed.

⁴ The Decision was subsequently circulated as WT/L/540.

The General Council took note of the statements.

- (ii) *Report by the Chairman on Examination of Scope and Modalities for Non-Violation and Situation Complaints under Article XXIII of GATT 1994 (WT/GC/M/81)*

Ministers at Doha directed the TRIPS Council to continue its examination of the scope and modalities for complaints of the types provided for under subparagraphs 1(b) and 1(c) of Article XXIII of GATT 1994 and make recommendations to the Fifth Session of the Ministerial Conference (WT/MIN(01)/17, paragraph 11.1).

At the General Council meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the Chairman of the Council for TRIPS reported on the Council's consideration of this matter.

The representative of Peru spoke.

The General Council took note of the statement and of the report on this matter contained in IP/C/27 and Add.1, and that the report would be forwarded to the Ministerial Conference.

- (g) *Work Programme on Electronic Commerce – Reports from Subsidiary Bodies and on the Dedicated Discussions on Cross-Cutting Issues under the auspices of the General Council (WT/GC/M/81)*

Ministers at Doha agreed to continue the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce, and instructed the General Council to consider the most appropriate institutional arrangements for handling the Work Programme, and to report on further progress to the Fifth Session. Ministers also declared that Members would maintain their current practice of not imposing customs duties on electronic transmissions until the Fifth Session (paragraph 34 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration). In October 2002, the General Council agreed to maintain, for the duration of the work until the Fifth Session, the current institutional arrangements for handling the Work Programme, i.e. that the Councils for Trade in Services, Trade in Goods and TRIPS, and the Committee on Trade and Development would examine and report on aspects of electronic commerce relevant to their respective areas of competence, and that the General Council would play a central role in the entire process, would keep the Work Programme under continuous review and would consider any trade-related issue of a cross-cutting nature.

At its meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the General Council considered reports on the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce from subsidiary bodies and on the dedicated discussions on cross-cutting issues under the auspices of the General Council (G/L/635, S/C/18, IP/C/29, WT/COMTD/47, WT/GC/W/505 and Corr.1).

The Chairmen of the Council for TRIPS and of the Committee on Trade and Development, and Deputy Director-General Mr. Yerxa introduced their respective reports.

The representative of Cuba spoke.

The General Council took note of the reports of the Council for Trade in Goods, the Council for Trade in Services, the Council for TRIPS, the Committee on Trade and Development and the Dedicated Sessions on Cross-cutting Issues in documents G/L/635, S/C/18, IP/C/29, WT/COMTD/47, WT/GC/W/505 and Corr.1, and of the statements, and that the reports would be forwarded to the Ministerial Conference.

(h) Work Programme on Small Economies – Reports (WT/GC/M/78, 80, 81)

At the General Council meeting on 10 February 2003, Deputy Director-General Mr. Thompson-Flôres, on behalf of the Chairman of the Dedicated Sessions of the Committee on Trade and Development, reported on the Committee's activities on the Work Programme on Small Economies.

The General Council took note of the report by Deputy Director-General Mr. Thompson-Flôres on behalf of the Chairman of the Dedicated Sessions of the CTD.

At the General Council meeting on 15 May 2003, the Chairman of the Dedicated Sessions of the Committee on Trade and Development reported on the Committee's work since the last report to the General Council in February.

The representatives of the United States and Mauritius spoke.

The General Council took note of the report by the Chairman of the Dedicated Sessions of the CTD and of the statements.

At the General Council meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the Chairman of the Dedicated Sessions of the Committee on Trade and Development introduced the Committee's report on the work under the Work Programme on Small Economies (WT/COMTD/SE/1).

The General Council took note of the report of the Dedicated Sessions of the Committee on Trade and Development in WT/COMTD/SE/1 and of the statement, and that the report would be forwarded to the Ministerial Conference.

(i) Review of Progress on the Implementation Issues Referred to WTO Bodies under the Decision of 14 November 2001 on Implementation-Related issues and Concerns⁵ (WT/GC/M/80)

and

(j) Review of progress on development-related issues of the Doha Work Programme⁴ (WT/GC/M/80)

At its meeting on 15 May 2003, the General Council considered communications from India on the review of progress on the implementation issues referred to WTO bodies under the Decision of 14 November 2001 on Implementation-Related Issues and Concerns (WT/GC/W/494), as well as from Tanzania on behalf of the Informal Group of Developing Countries on the review of progress on development-related issues of the Doha Work Programme (WT/GC/W/495).

The representatives of India, Tanzania (on behalf of the Informal Group of Developing Countries), Cuba, Botswana (on behalf of the ACP Group), China, United States, Kenya, Senegal, Zambia, Japan, European Communities, Brazil, Indonesia, Uganda, Djibouti, Argentina, Malaysia, Philippines, Barbados, Thailand, Paraguay and Canada, and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

⁵ At the Chairman's suggestion the matters under Points 1(i) and (j) were taken up together and the discussion thereof is reflected accordingly in the minutes of the meeting.

- (k) Negotiations on Improvements and Clarifications of the DSU - Extension of Timeframe (WT/GC/M/81)

Ministers at Doha agreed "to negotiations on improvements and clarifications of the Dispute Settlement Understanding. The negotiations should be based on the work done thus far as well as any additional proposals by Members, and aim to agree on improvements and clarifications not later than May 2003 ... " (WT/MIN(01)/DEC/1, paragraph 30).

At the General Council meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the Chairman recalled that at the TNC meeting on 10 June, the TNC Chairman had suggested that any decision about a new timeframe for the DSU negotiations was for the Ministerial Conference, or the General Council under its delegated authority, to take and that it might well be possible to resolve this at the General Council level. He had given some thought to this matter in light of the discussions at the TNC meeting, and had also discussed it with the Chairman of the Special Session of the DSB, as well as with delegations. He was also aware that a number of delegations had emphasized that an important consideration in any decision on this matter was the fact that these negotiations were outside the single undertaking, and therefore that any decision on the timeframe for completion of work in this area should take this into account. Bearing in mind these elements, and having consulted with delegations, most recently at the meeting of Heads of Delegation on 21 July, he proposed that the General Council agree as follows: (i) that the timeframe for conclusion of the negotiations on clarifications and improvements of the DSU be extended by one year, i.e., to aim to conclude the work by May 2004; (ii) that this continued work build on the work done to date, and take into account proposals put forward by Members as well as the text put forward by the Chairman of the Special Session of the DSB; and (iii) that the first meeting of the Special Session of the DSB when it resumed its work be devoted to a discussion of conceptual issues.

The representatives of the United States and Japan spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements and agreed to the Chairman's proposal.

- (l) Reports of the Working Groups on the Relationship between Trade and Investment, the Interaction between Trade and Competition Policy, and Transparency in Government Procurement, and of the Council for Trade in Goods on Trade Facilitation Timeframe (WT/GC/M/81)

At its meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the General Council considered reports of the Working Groups on the Relationship between Trade and Investment (WT/WGTI/7), the Interaction between Trade and Competition Policy (WT/WGTCP/7), and Transparency in Government Procurement (WT/WGTGP/7), and of the Council for Trade in Goods (G/L/637).

The Chairpersons of the Working Groups on the Relationship between Trade and Investment, and on Transparency in Government Procurement, and of the Council for Trade in Goods on Trade Facilitation, and the Secretariat on behalf of the Chairman of the Working Group on the Interaction between Trade and Competition Policy introduced the respective reports.

The representatives of the Philippines and the European Communities, and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the reports of the Working Groups and the Council for Trade in Goods in documents WT/WGTI/7, WT/WGTCP/7, WT/WGTGP/7 and G/L/637, and of the statements, and that the reports would be forwarded to the Ministerial Conference

- (m) Reports of the Working Groups on Trade, Debt and Finance, and on Trade and Transfer of Technology (WT/GC/M/81)

Ministers at Doha agreed to an examination, in Working Groups under the auspices of the General Council, of the relationship between trade, debt and finance and of the relationship between trade and transfer of technology, respectively, and of any possible recommendations, and instructed the General Council to report on progress in these respective examinations to the Fifth Session of the Ministerial Conference (WT/MIN(01)/DEC/1, paragraphs 36 and 37).

At its meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the General Council considered reports of the Working Groups on Trade, Debt and Finance (WT/WGTDF/2), and on Trade and Transfer of Technology (WT/WGTTT/5).

The Chairpersons of the respective Working Groups introduced the reports.

The General Council took note of the reports of the Working Groups in documents WT/WGTDF/2 and WT/WGTTT/5 and of the statements, and that the reports would be forwarded to the Ministerial Conference.

- (n) Committee on Trade and Environment – Report Pursuant to Paragraphs 32 and 33 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration (WT/GC/M/81)

Ministers at Doha instructed the Committee on Trade and Environment to give particular attention to (i) the effect of environmental measures on market access, especially in relation to developing countries, (ii) the relevant provisions of the TRIPS Agreement, and (iii) labelling requirements for environmental purposes, and to report to the Fifth Session of the Ministerial Conference and make recommendations, where appropriate, with respect to future action, including the desirability of negotiations (WT/MIN(01)/DEC/1, paragraph 32). Furthermore Ministers recognized the importance of technical assistance and capacity building in the field of trade and environment to developing countries and encouraged the sharing of expertise and experience regarding environmental reviews at the national level, and instructed the Committee to prepare a report on these activities for the Fifth Session (WT/MIN(01)/DEC/1, paragraph 33).

At its meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the General Council considered a report of the Committee on Trade and Environment on these matters (WT/CTE/8).

The Chairman of the Committee on Trade and Environment introduced the report.

The General Council took note of the report of the Committee on Trade and Environment in WT/CTE/8 and that the report would be forwarded to the Ministerial Conference.

- (o) Rules of Origin – Harmonization Work Programme (WT/GC/M/81)

In December 2002, the General Council agreed to extend to July 2003 the deadline for completion of negotiations on the core policy issues identified in the CRO Chair's report to the General Council of 15 July 2002, and also that, following resolution of these core policy issues, the Committee on Rules of Origin complete its remaining technical work by 31 December 2003.

At the General Council meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the Chairman recalled that since the December 2002 meeting of the General Council, both the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Committee on Rules of Origin had been pursuing informal consultations at his request and on his behalf, with a view to resolving all the 94 core policy issues before the present meeting.

The Chairman of the Committee reported on these consultations.

The Chairman said, *inter alia*, that in the light of the report from the Chairman of the Committee, and recognizing the need for discussing a possible new working methodology in order to facilitate the negotiations, and considering the CRO Chairman's proposals contained in document JOB(03)/132 as a good basis for further work, he would propose that the General Council extend to July 2004 the deadline for completion of negotiations on the core policy issues identified in the CRO Chair's report to the General Council of 15 July 2002. He also proposed that following resolution of these core policy issues, the Committee on Rules of Origin complete its remaining technical work, including the work referred to in Article 9.3(b) of the Agreement on Rules of Origin, by 31 December 2004.

The representatives of Brazil, India, Pakistan and Bulgaria, and the Chairman of the Committee and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements and agreed to extend to July 2004 the deadline for completion of negotiations on the core policy issues identified in the CRO Chair's report to the General Council of 15 July 2002. It also agreed that following resolution of these core policy issues, the CRO would complete its remaining technical work, including the work referred to in Article 9.3(b) of the Agreement on Rules of Origin, by 31 December 2004.

- (p) Implementation and Adequacy of Technical Cooperation and Capacity-Building Commitments in the Doha Ministerial Declaration – Report by the Director-General Pursuant to Paragraph 41 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration (WT/GC/M/81, 82)

Paragraph 41 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration calls on the Director-General to report to the Fifth Session of the Ministerial Conference on the implementation and adequacy of the commitments on technical cooperation and capacity building identified in paragraphs 16, 21, 24, 26, 27, 33, 38-40, 42 and 43 of the Doha Declaration.

At the General Council meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the Director-General made a substantive oral presentation highlighting the main elements from his report, which he said would be circulated shortly.

The General Council took note of the statement and that there would be an opportunity for delegations to comment on the report by the Director-General on Implementation and adequacy of technical cooperation and capacity-building commitments in the Doha Ministerial Declaration following its circulation.⁶

At its meeting on 26-27 and 30 August 2003, the General Council considered the report from the Director-General in WT/MIN(03)/3.

The representatives of the United States, Bangladesh (on behalf of the LDCs), Mauritius, Kenya, Canada, Djibouti, South Africa and Barbados spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements and of the report in WT/MIN(03)/3, and that it would be updated and forwarded to the Ministerial Conference.⁷

The Director-General spoke.

⁶ Subsequently circulated as WT/MIN(03)/3.

⁷ Subsequently circulated as WT/MIN(03)/3/Add.1.

The General Council took note of the statement.

- (q) Issues affecting Least-Developed Countries
- (i) *Report by the Director-General Pursuant to Paragraph 43 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration (WT/GC/M/81, 82)*
- (ii) *Report by the Director-General on Implementation of the Commitment by Ministers to Facilitate and Accelerate Accession of LDCs (WT/GC/M/81)*

Paragraph 43 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration calls on the Director-General, following coordination with heads of the other agencies in the Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance to LDCs, to provide a full report to the Fifth Session on all issues affecting LDCs. Paragraph 42 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration instructs the Sub-Committee for Least-Developed Countries to report on an agreed work programme to the General Council at its first meeting in 2002. Paragraph 18(v) of the WTO Work Programme for LDCs adopted by the General Council in February 2002 mandates that a status report be submitted by the Director-General to the Fifth Session of the Ministerial Conference on the "Implementation of the Commitment by Ministers to Facilitate and Accelerate the Accession of the LDCs".

At the General Council meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the Director-General made a substantive oral presentation highlighting the main elements of these reports, and said that his report pursuant to Paragraph 43 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration on all issues affecting LDCs would be circulated shortly.

The representative of Zambia spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements and of the report by the Director-General on Implementation of the Commitment by Ministers to Facilitate and Accelerate the Accession of the LDCs in WT/MIN(03)/2, and that the report would be forwarded to the Ministerial Conference. It also took note that there would be an opportunity for delegations to comment on the Director-General's report on all issues affecting LDCs following its circulation.⁸

At its meeting on 26-27 and 30 August 2003, the General Council considered the Director-General's report on all issues affecting LDCs in WT/MIN(03)/1.

The representatives of Bangladesh (on behalf of the LDCs), Djibouti and Burkina Faso spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements and of the report in WT/MIN(03)/1, and that it would be forwarded to the Ministerial Conference.

2. Review of the exemption provided under paragraph 3 of GATT 1994 (WT/GC/M/78)

At the General Council meeting on 10 February 2003, the Chairman recalled the procedure to be followed for the conduct of the review of the exemption provided under Paragraph 3 of GATT 1994 under the review cycle starting in 2003, which the General Council had agreed in December 2002. In connection with the review, he drew attention to an annual report circulated by the United States in WT/L/512.

The representatives of the United States, Panama, Chile, Australia, Japan, European Communities and Hong Kong, China spoke.

⁸ Subsequently circulated as WT/MIN(03)/1.

The General Council took note of the statements and agreed to revert to this item at a future meeting.

3. Proposal to remove and avoid inconsistencies in the texts of the WTO Agreements (WT/GC/M/78)

At its meeting on 10 February 2003, the General Council considered a communication on this matter from Chile in WT/GC/W/489.

The representatives of Chile, Argentina, Cuba, United States, Australia and Norway, and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements and agreed to revert to this item at a future meeting, and that in the meantime the Chairman would consult with Members on the most efficient way forward.

4. Accession matters

(a) Bhutan (WT/GC/M/80)

At its meeting on 15 May 2003, the Chairman informed the General Council that Mr. Petritsch (Austria) had agreed to replace Mr. Kreid (Austria) as chair of the Working Party on the Accession of Bhutan.

The General Council took note of this information.

(b) Ethiopia (WT/GC/M/78, 80)

At its meeting on 10 February 2003, the General Council considered a communication from Ethiopia (WT/ACC/ETH/1) concerning its interest in acceding to the WTO Agreement pursuant to Article XII.

The representatives of Ethiopia (as an observer), Morocco (on behalf of the African Group), Bangladesh (on behalf of the LDCs), European Communities, India, Israel, Kenya, Pakistan, China, United States, Peru (on behalf of GRULAC), Japan, Indonesia (on behalf of the ASEAN Members), Bahrain, Botswana, Canada, Turkey and Slovenia (also on behalf of Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovak Republic) spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements and of the expressions of welcome and support, and agreed to establish a working party to examine the application of Ethiopia, and authorized its Chairman to designate the Chairperson of the Working Party in consultation with representatives of Members and with the representative of Ethiopia.

The Chairman invited the representative of Ethiopia to consult with the Secretariat as to further procedures, in particular regarding the basic documentation to be considered by the Working Party.

The representative of Ethiopia (as an observer) spoke.

The General Council took note of the statement.

At its meeting on 15 May 2003, the Chairman informed the General Council that Mr. McMillan (United Kingdom) had agreed to chair the Working Party.

The General Council took note of this information.

(c) Iran (WT/GC/M/78, 80, 81, 82)

At its meeting on 10 February 2003, the General Council again considered Iran's request for accession to the WTO Agreement.

The representatives of the United States and Malaysia (on behalf of the Informal Group of Developing Countries) spoke.

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

At its meeting on 15 May 2003, the General Council again considered this matter.

The representatives of the United States and Tanzania (on behalf of the Informal Group of Developing Countries) spoke.

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

At its meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the General Council again considered this matter.

The representatives of the United States and Tanzania (on behalf of the Informal Group of Developing Countries) spoke.

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

At its meeting on 26-27 and 30 August 2003, the General Council again considered this matter.

The representatives of the United States and Tanzania (on behalf of the Informal Group of Developing Countries) spoke.

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

(d) Yemen (WT/GC/M/80)

At its meeting on 15 May 2003, the Chairman informed the General Council that Mr. Röben (Germany) had agreed to chair the Working Party on the Accession of Yemen.

The General Council took note of this information.

5. Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration

(a) Reports (WT/GC/M/78, 80, 81, 82)

At the General Council meeting on 10 February 2003, the Chairman of the Budget Committee reported on the Committee's progress on the review of methodologies for future pay adjustments for WTO staff, and also informed the General Council on the situation with regard to resources available

for WTO technical activities in 2003 and on the cash position of the Doha Development Agenda Global Trust Fund.

The General Council took note of the statement by the Chairman of the Budget Committee.

At its meeting on 15 May 2003, the General Council considered reports by the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration on matters considered at its meetings held from October to December 2002 as well as on the Committee's review of methodologies for future pay adjustments for WTO staff (WT/BFA/63 and 64 respectively).

The Chairman of the Committee introduced the reports.

The General Council took note of the statement by the Committee Chairman and adopted the report in WT/BFA/63. The General Council then approved the Budget Committee's specific recommendations in paragraph 27 (a) to (g) of its report in WT/BFA/64, and adopted that report.

The representatives of Chile and Cuba, and the Director-General and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

At its meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the General Council considered a report by the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration on matters considered at its meetings held from January to May 2003 (WT/BFA/65).

The Chairman of the Committee introduced the report.

The General Council took note of the statement, approved the Budget Committee's specific recommendations in paragraphs 17, 31, 33, 35 and 39 of the report in WT/BFA/65 and adopted the report.

At its meeting on 26-27 and 30 August 2003, the General Council considered a report by the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration on recommendations following its meetings of 11 July and 14 August 2003 (WT/BFA/67).

The Chairman of the Committee introduced the report.

The General Council took note of the statement, approved the Budget Committee's specific recommendations in paragraphs 1 and 2 of the report in WT/BFA/67, and adopted the report.

(b) Doha Development Agenda Global Trust Fund – Situation as at 30 June 2003 (WT/GC/M/81)

At the General Council meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the Chairman of the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration reported on the cash situation of the Doha Development Agenda Global Trust Fund as at 30 June 2003 and urged donors who had not yet done so to transfer their promised contributions as quickly as possible.

The representative of Korea spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

6. Waivers under Article IX of the WTO Agreement

(a) Kimberley Process Certification Scheme for Rough Diamonds (WT/GC/M/80)

At its meeting on 15 May 2003, the General Council considered a request by Australia, Brazil, Canada, Israel, Japan, Korea, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Thailand, United Arab Emirates and the United States for a waiver from their respective obligations under Article I.1, Article XI.1, and Article XIII.1 of GATT 1994 (G/C/W/431 and Corr.1 and 2), and the related draft Decision (G/C/W/432/Rev.1).

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

The representative of Poland spoke.

The Chairman then noted that in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 3 of the draft Decision, the European Communities, Switzerland and the Czech Republic had notified the Goods Council of their wish to also be covered by the waiver, and that, accordingly, these Members would be covered by the provisions of the waiver when adopted. He added that it was open to any other WTO Member which was not currently listed in the Annex to the draft Decision and which wished to be covered by the waiver, to notify the CTG in a similar way in due course in accordance with paragraph 3 of the draft Decision.

The General Council took note of the report of the Chairman of the Council for Trade in Goods and of the statements and, in accordance with the Decision-Making Procedures under Articles IX and XII of the WTO Agreement agreed in November 1995 (WT/L/93), adopted the Decision (WT/L/518).

The representatives of Canada, Chinese Taipei and the United States spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

(b) Introduction of Harmonized System 1996 changes into WTO Schedules of Tariff Concessions

(i) *Argentina, El Salvador, Israel, Malaysia, Morocco, Pakistan, Panama, Thailand and Venezuela (WT/GC/M/81)*

At its meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the General Council considered requests from Argentina (G/L/606), El Salvador (G/L/608), Israel (G/L/620), Malaysia (G/L/615), Morocco (G/L/616), Pakistan (G/L/612), Panama (G/L/607), Thailand (G/L/611 and Corr.1) and Venezuela (G/L/609) for waivers or extensions of waivers for the introduction of the Harmonized System 1996 changes into schedules of tariff concessions, and related draft Decisions (Argentina – G/C/W/452, El Salvador – G/C/W/454, Israel – G/C/W/462, Malaysia – G/C/W/460, Morocco – G/C/W/461, Pakistan – G/C/W/458, Panama – G/C/W/453, Thailand – G/C/W/457 and Venezuela – G/C/W/455).

The Chairman of the Council for Trade in Goods reported on the consideration of these requests by that 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 agreed in November 1995 (WT/L/93), adopted the Decisions (WT/L/523 – Argentina, WT/L/525 – El Salvador, WT/L/531 – Israel, WT/L/529 – Malaysia, WT/L/530 – Morocco, WT/L/528 – Pakistan, WT/L/524 – Panama, WT/L/527 – Thailand and WT/L/526 – Venezuela).

(c) Transposition of Schedule into the Harmonized System

(i) *Sri Lanka (WT/GC/M/81)*

At its meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the General Council considered a request by Sri Lanka (G/L/610) for an extension of its waiver previously granted in connection with its implementation of the Harmonized System, and a draft Decision to this effect (G/C/W/456).

The Chairman of the Council for Trade in Goods reported on the consideration of this request by that 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 agreed in November 1995 (WT/L/93), adopted the Decision (WT/L/532).

7. Preparations for the Fifth Session of the Ministerial Conference

(a) Administrative matters

(i) *Annual report of the General Council to the Ministerial Conference (WT/GC/M/78)*

At the General Council meeting on 10 February 2003, the Chairman recalled, *inter alia*, the procedures for an annual overview of WTO activities, adopted by the General Council in November 1995 (WT/L/105), and proposed that the General Council submit to the Fifth Session a brief update to its annual report for 2002 which would describe developments since December 2002. He noted that he was referring only to the routine annual reports of a factual nature that all WTO bodies were required to make under existing procedures, and not to any specific reports that Ministers at Doha had requested to be submitted to them. The Ministerial Conference would therefore have before it, as the annual report of the General Council, a compilation of the 2002 Annual Reports of all the WTO bodies, together with an update report concerning developments in 2003. He proposed that the General Council take note of his statement and agree to follow the procedure he had just outlined, as had been done for the Second Ministerial Conference.

The General Council so agreed.

(ii) *Attendance of observers*

- Governments (WT/GC/M/78, 82)

At the General Council meeting on 10 February 2003, the Chairman recalled that 39 Governments had participated as observers at the Doha Ministerial Conference in accordance with the Guidelines in Annex 2 of the General Council's Rules of Procedure (WT/L/161). Out of these 39 Governments, 3 had since acceded to the WTO Agreement and thirty-one currently had observer status in the General Council and were therefore automatically invited to attend the Ministerial Conference in that capacity, pursuant to the Guidelines. Five other Governments had, at their request, previously been accorded observer status only at Ministerial Conferences: Comoros, Eritrea, Liberia, Libya and San Marino. He proposed that these Governments also be invited to attend the Cancún Ministerial Conference as observers in keeping with the agreed Guidelines. Requests from any other Governments for observer status, either at the General Council or at the Ministerial Conference, would have to be considered on their merits in accordance with the Guidelines when they were received.

The General Council took note of the statement and so agreed.

At its meeting on 26-27 and 30 August 2003, the General Council considered requests for observer status at the Fifth Ministerial Conference from the Governments of Niue, the Cook Islands and Afghanistan (WT/L/534, 535 and 538 respectively).

The General Council agreed to grant observer status at the Fifth Ministerial Conference to the Governments of Niue, the Cook Islands and Afghanistan.

- International Intergovernmental Organizations (WT/GC/M/78, 80, 81, 82)

At the General Council meeting on 10 February 2003, the Chairman recalled, *inter alia*, the Guidelines for observer status for IGOs in Annex 3 of the General Council's Rules of Procedure (WT/L/161) and also that prior to each of the past sessions of the Ministerial Conference, the General Council had agreed to invite IGOs as observers to the Ministerial Conference on the basis of the following elements: (i) organizations that were observers to the General Council would be automatically invited; (ii) organizations that were observers to subsidiary bodies would be invited if they requested to attend; and (iii) consultations would be held to determine which other organizations that were not observers to the WTO, and who requested attendance at the Ministerial Conference, should be invited. A list of the IGOs that had been invited to attend the Doha Ministerial Conference on the basis of these elements was set out in WT/MIN(01)/INF/5/Rev.3. He proposed that these organizations also be invited to the Ministerial Conference in Cancún as observers, in keeping with the agreed Guidelines. Requests from any other IGOs that had not already been observers at the Ministerial Conference in Doha, and who were neither observers in the General Council nor in other WTO bodies, would of course have to be considered on their merits in accordance with the Guidelines when they were received. None had so far been submitted. If such requests were received in the future, the General Council would revert to them at a subsequent meeting. He noted that one delegation had suggested to him that there should perhaps be a deadline for the consideration of any such requests from other organizations, which might be set at three months prior to the date of the Conference, and suggested that Members reflect on this and return to it at a subsequent meeting if necessary.

The representative of Egypt (on behalf of the Arab Members) spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements and agreed to follow the procedure outlined by the Chairman.

At its meeting on 15 May 2003, the General Council considered a request for observer status at the Fifth Ministerial Conference from the League of Arab States.

The Chairman proposed that with regard to this request the General Council proceed in exactly the same way it had in the past with regard to requests from IGOs for observer status at Ministerial Conferences who were neither observers in the General Council nor in other WTO bodies. Accordingly, he proposed that, unless any objection was received by the Secretariat from any Member by 15 June 2003, the League of Arab States be granted observer status to the Cancún Ministerial Conference. As in the past, he would inform the General Council at its next meeting of the situation with regard to this request.

The representatives of Egypt (on behalf of the Arab Members), Kuwait (also on behalf of Qatar, Oman, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates), Jordan, Djibouti, Tunisia, Morocco, Mauritania, Canada and the United States, and the Chairman spoke.

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

At its meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the General Council reverted to the request for observer status at the Fifth Ministerial Conference from the League of Arab States.

The representatives of Israel, United States, Egypt (on behalf of the Arab Members) and Jordan spoke.

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

The General Council then considered requests for observer status at the Fifth Ministerial Conference from the Council of Europe Development Bank, the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation, and United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

The Chairman proposed that with regard to these requests, the General Council proceed in exactly the same way it had in the past on requests from other IGOs for observer status at Ministerial Conferences who were neither observers in the General Council or in other WTO bodies. Accordingly, he proposed that, unless an objection was received by the Secretariat from any Member by 15 August, the Council of Europe Development Bank, the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation, and United Nations Human Settlements Programme be granted observer status to the Cancún Ministerial Conference. As in the past, he would inform the General Council at its next meeting of the resulting action with regard to these requests. The shorter timeframe was being proposed in order to allow these Organizations to make the necessary travel and accommodation arrangements in order to be able to attend the Ministerial Conference.

The representative of Egypt and the Chairman spoke.

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

At its meeting on 26-27 and 30 August 2003, the General Council again considered the request from the League of Arab States for observer status at the Fifth Ministerial Conference.

The representatives of Israel, United States, Egypt (on behalf of the Arab Members), Jordan and Cuba, and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

The General Council then considered the requests for observer status from the Council of Europe Development Bank, the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation, and United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

The representatives of Egypt (on behalf of the Arab Members), Kenya, Canada, Morocco and Djibouti, and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements and agreed to revert to the broader issue of observership of international intergovernmental organizations in WTO bodies at a future meeting.

(iii) Attendance of Non-Governmental Organizations (WT/GC/M/78)

At the General Council meeting on 10 February 2003, the Chairman proposed, with regard to attendance of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) at the Fifth Ministerial Conference, that Members adopt similar criteria to those which had been adopted by the General Council for the four previous Ministerial Conferences. Following this practice, NGOs that wished to attend the Fifth

Ministerial Conference would be requested to supply, in detail, all the necessary information indicating how they were concerned with matters related to those of the WTO. In order to facilitate the registration process for NGOs and the WTO Secretariat, he proposed that the detailed presentation of activities be waived for those NGOs who had been duly registered for at least two previous Ministerial Conferences, and that registration for them be granted automatically. NGOs that qualified would still be obliged to officially request registration and would be subject to all other procedures and deadlines that applied to NGOs requesting to attend the Fifth Ministerial Conference.⁹ Based on the information provided, the Secretariat would process a list of registered NGOs. He proposed that in line with past practice, this list be circulated to all WTO Members for information during the course of July. Confirmation of registration would then be sent to the NGOs as from 1 August. He proposed that Members agree to follow the procedure he had outlined in order to allow sufficient time for the NGOs to be informed and to make the necessary arrangements for their attendance at the Fifth Ministerial Conference.

The General Council took note of the statement and so agreed.

(iv) *Election of Officers for the Fifth Session (WT/GC/M/78, 81)*

Ministers at Doha requested the General Council to hold consultations with a view to determining the presiding officers, namely, the Chairperson and three Vice-Chairpersons of the Ministerial Conference, who would hold office until the end of the Fifth Session.

At the General Council meeting on 10 February 2003, the Chairman said that in keeping with customary practice, the General Council would elect a representative of the host government – in the present case, Mexico – to chair the Conference. He proposed that his successor hold consultations with regard to the election of the three Vice-Chairpersons of the Conference, and that the General Council revert to this matter at a future meeting in order that the full slate could be agreed at the same time.

The General Council took note of the statement and so agreed.

At its meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the Chairman informed the General Council that on the basis of consultations with representatives of broad regional groupings, who had themselves suggested consensus candidates to him, he was in a position to propose that the General Council elect the following slate of presiding officers for the Fifth Session of the Ministerial Conference:

Chairperson:	Minister Luis Ernesto Derbez, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mexico
Vice- Chairpersons:	Minister Laurens Jan Brinkhorst, Minister of Economic Affairs, Netherlands
	Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury, MP, Minister for Commerce, Bangladesh
	Minister Youssef Boutros Ghali, Minister of Foreign Trade, Egypt

The General Council agreed to elect the above presiding officers for the Fifth Session of the Ministerial Conference.

⁹ These procedures were subsequently circulated in WT/MIN(03)/INF/1.

(v) *Administrative arrangements (WT/GC/M/82)*

At the General Council meeting on 26-27 and 30 August 2003, the Chairman informed delegations about arrangements for meetings at the Ministerial Conference. As regards arrangements for plenary meetings, a proposed order of business for these meetings had been circulated in WT/MIN(03)/5, providing an outline of how work at these sessions was proposed to be organized. Also, an Information Note regarding the delivery of statements and the distribution of the texts of statements had been circulated in document WT/MIN(03)/INF/10. As regards arrangements for informal consultative meetings that would be organized throughout the Conference by the Chairman of the Ministerial Conference, he informed delegations that the latter had indicated to him his intention to advise all delegations about the overall organization of the informal process as early as possible. In broad terms, the informal consultative process at Cancún would mirror the Geneva preparatory process – in order to ensure both transparency and a sense of continuity – and would be conducted in open-ended informal meetings of all Heads-of-Delegations. Delegations would be kept informed of these meetings through every means possible at the Conference centre. Building on practice at Doha, on each day of the Conference, an hour in the morning and an hour in the afternoon would be set aside during which no informal meetings will be scheduled, in order to allow delegations the time they required to consult among themselves and in regional groupings as necessary. The Chairman of the Ministerial Conference would provide greater details on the scheduling and organization of all meetings in the informal process.

The representatives of Mexico, Canada and Chile, and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

(vi) *Extension of deadline for registration of participants to the Fifth Session of the Ministerial Conference (WT/GC/M/81)*

At the General Council meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the Chairman informed Members that in response to requests from delegations, the deadline for registration of participants to the Fifth Session of the Ministerial Conference had been extended to 15 August. Delegations were requested to register as soon as possible and not to forget to communicate in writing to the WTO Conference Office the list of their participants at the Conference, whose deadline for submitting it was also 15 August.

The General Council took note of the statement.

(b) *Updates to the 2002 Annual Reports (WT/GC/M/81)*

At its meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the General Council considered updates to annual reports for 2002 from the General Council (WT/GC/W/504); Dispute Settlement Body (WT/DSB/34); Trade Policy Review Body (WT/TPR/134); Sectoral Councils (G/L/637, S/C/17/Rev.1, IP/C/27/Add.1); Committees on Trade and Development (WT/COMTD/46); Balance-of-Payments Restrictions (WT/(BOP/R/70); Budget, Finance and Administration ((WT/BFA/66); Regional Trade Agreements (WT/REG/12); and Trade and Environment (WT/CTE/9); and Committees under the Plurilateral Trade Agreements (GPA/75, Job(03)/146). The Chairman suggested that exceptionally, and in the interests of allowing the General Council meeting to conclude on schedule, the Chairpersons of the various Councils and Committees not introduce their updating reports orally at the meeting unless they wished to draw particular attention to some aspect of the work carried out in their bodies, or to add anything to their updating reports.

The Chairman of the Council for Trade in Goods informed Members that further to the report from that Council in G/L/637, updating reports had also been circulated by subsidiary bodies of that Council in documents which he read out.

Following a suggestion by the Chairman at the outset of the meeting, the General Council then considered a communication from Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania regarding the crisis situation created by the long term trend towards decline in prices of primary commodities on the trade and development of developing countries heavily dependent on their exports, which contained a draft text on commodity issues for inclusion in the Declaration or other instrument that might be adopted at Cancún (WT/GC/W/508 and Corr.1).

The representative of Kenya (also on behalf of Uganda and Tanzania) introduced the communication in WT/GC/W/508 and Corr.1.

The representatives of India, Paraguay, Malaysia, Morocco, China, Zambia, Uganda, Australia, Colombia, Rwanda, Indonesia, United States, Jamaica, Botswana, Japan, Canada, Pakistan, Norway, Benin, European Communities, Bangladesh, Mali and Kenya, and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements and that this matter would be included in the consultations in the process towards Cancún.

The General Council then took note of the updating reports from WTO bodies in documents WT/DSB/34, WT/TPR/134, G/L/637, S/C/17/Rev.1, IP/C/27/Add.1, WT/COMTD/46, WT/BOP/R/70, WT/BFA/66, WT/REG/12, WT/CTE/9, GPA/75 and Job(03)/146, and also that these reports would be forwarded to the Ministerial Conference.

The General Council then adopted its draft report in document WT/GC/W/504 updating its annual report for 2002, on the understanding that the Secretariat would make the necessary adjustments to that report so as to include matters considered at the present meeting and the next. The report would then be circulated and also forwarded to the Ministerial Conference.

(c) Draft Ministerial Text (WT/GC/M/81, 82)

At its meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the General Council considered a draft Ministerial text circulated by the Chairman, on his own responsibility and in close cooperation with the Director-General, in JOB(03)/150. At the Chairman's suggestion, the draft Ministerial text was taken up together with the report by the Chairman of the Trade Negotiations Committee (referred to in Point 1(a) above), and the discussion is reflected accordingly in this Report and in the Minutes of the meeting.

The Chairman of the Trade Negotiation Committee introduced a report, made on his own responsibility, on the activities of the Trade Negotiation Committee (TN/C/3).

The Chairman then introduced the draft Ministerial text, and gave an indication of how he intended to proceed with regard to the further consideration of this text from 11 August, following the short summer recess.

The representatives of Morocco (on behalf of the African Group), Brazil, Canada, India, Colombia, Nigeria, European Communities, Japan, Argentina, Switzerland, China, United States, Bangladesh (on behalf of the LDCs), Paraguay, Czech Republic, Korea, Bulgaria, Chile, Venezuela, Norway, Kenya, Costa Rica, Honduras, El Salvador, Dominican Republic, Malaysia, Jamaica, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Namibia, Hungary, Cuba, Turkey, Chinese Taipei, Senegal, Mauritius, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Romania, Pakistan and Peru spoke.

The General Council took note of the report by the Chairman of the TNC in document TN/C/3 and of the draft Ministerial text in Job(03)/150. It also took note of the statements and that the report by the TNC Chairman would be forwarded to the Ministerial Conference.

At its meeting on 26-27 and 30 August 2003, the General Council considered a revised draft Ministerial text circulated in Job(03)/150/Rev.1 and Corr.1.

The representatives of the Philippines, Mexico, Bangladesh (on behalf of the LDCs), Argentina, European Communities, Bulgaria, India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Ecuador, Morocco (on behalf of the African Group), Botswana (on behalf of the ACP Group), Hungary, Japan, Bolivia, Australia, Kenya, Zambia, Senegal, Venezuela, United States, Uruguay, Brazil, Canada, Jamaica (also on behalf of Barbados, Belize, Saint Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago), Costa Rica, Mauritius; Hong Kong, China; Egypt, Turkey, Korea, El Salvador, Honduras, China, Chile, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Slovak Republic, Paraguay, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Colombia, Peru, Gabon, Romania, Thailand, Czech Republic, Barbados, Uganda (also on behalf of the LDCs), Chinese Taipei, Cuba, Lesotho, Kyrgyz Republic, Lithuania, Switzerland, Croatia, Iceland, Zimbabwe, Israel, Oman, Bahrain, Panama and South Africa, and the Director-General and the Chairman spoke.

In the light of the discussion, the Chairman stated his intention to forward the text to the Chairman of the Ministerial Conference under his own responsibility together with a covering letter.

The representatives of Brazil, Japan, India, Argentina, Norway, Canada, European Communities, Kenya, Australia, United States, Bulgaria, India and Malaysia then spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

On 30 August, prior to the close of the meeting, the Chairman invited the Chairman of the Council for Trade in Services to provide an update on his consultations regarding the modalities for the special treatment of least-developed country Members to be included in Paragraph 6 of the draft Ministerial text.

The Chairman of the Council for Trade in Services provided an update report.

The representative of Bangladesh spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

(d) Poverty Reduction – Sectoral Initiative in Favour of Cotton (WT/GC/M/82)

At the General Council meeting on 26-27 and 30 August 2003, the representative of Benin, also on behalf Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali, introduced a draft Decision in document WT/GC/W/511 concerning specific measures in favour of cotton with a view to poverty alleviation.

The representatives of Bangladesh (on behalf of the LDCs), Morocco (on behalf of the African Group) and Uganda spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

(e) Communication from the Kyrgyz Republic (WT/GC/M/82)

At the General Council meeting on 26-27 and 30 August 2003, the representative of the Kyrgyz Republic introduced a communication in document WT/MIN(03)/W/3 outlining its interest in seeking recognition as a developing newly-acceded Member.

The representative of Turkey spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

8. Sixth Session of the Ministerial Conference (WT/GC/M/82)

At the General Council meeting on 26-27 and 30 August 2003, the representative of Hong Kong, China introduced a communication his Government in document WT/GC/72 in which it offered to host the Sixth Session of the Ministerial Conference.

The Chairman proposed that the General Council take note with appreciation of the offer from the Government of Hong Kong, China and that, since the date and venue of the next Ministerial was an item on the Agenda of the Cancún Ministerial Conference, he hold informal consultations urgently on the question of the venue of the Sixth Session of the Ministerial Conference and report back to the Chairman of the Cancún Ministerial Conference at the earliest opportunity, with a view to assisting him in preparing this item for consideration at the Conference. The Chairman also invited any other Member Government wishing to host the next Ministerial Conference to so inform him in order that he might take this into account during his consultations.

The General Council so agreed.

9. Coherence in Global Economic Policy-Making (WT/GC/M/78, 79)

At the General Council meeting on 10 February 2003, the Chairman recalled that the General Council had met from time to time in the past on the subject of Coherence in Global Economic Policy-making, most recently in January 2001, and informed Members that the Director-General considered that a further meeting in the spring would be timely, and that it would be valuable for the latter to inform Members of his consultations with the Managing Director of the IMF and the President of the World Bank, both of whom would be invited to participate. The date in mind for this meeting was 13 May.

The General Council took note of the statement.

At its meeting on 13 May 2003, the General Council held a discussion on coherence in global economic policy-making and cooperation between the WTO, IMF and World Bank. The General Council had before it a Note by the Secretariat on this subject, prepared in cooperation with staff of the IMF and the World Bank (WT/TF/COH/S/7).

The Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, the President of the World Bank and the Director-General made statements.

The representatives of Morocco (on behalf of the African Group), Bangladesh, United States, India, Argentina, Canada, Japan, Gabon, Switzerland, China, Kenya, Australia, Jamaica, Indonesia, European Communities, Korea, Cuba, Paraguay, Pakistan, Chile, Barbados, Egypt, Oman and Colombia, and the representatives of the United Nations, the IMF and the World Bank, and the Director-General and the Chairman spoke.

10. Trade in Textiles and Clothing

- (a) Developing Members' concern about potential reduction in market (quota) access in 2004 (WT/GC/M/81)

At its meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the General Council considered a communication from Bangladesh; Brazil; Costa Rica; Egypt; Guatemala; Hong Kong, China; India; Indonesia; Macao, China; Maldives; Pakistan; People's Republic of China; Sri Lanka; Thailand and Vietnam on their concerns about potential reduction in market (quota) access in 2004, and requesting that the General Council consider the matter and recommend that developed Members take steps to ensure that there was no diminution of quota access for developing Members on account of quota carry forward in 2004 (WT/GC/W/503).

The representatives of India, Pakistan, Thailand, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Brazil, China, United States, European Communities and Hong Kong, China, and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements and that it was the Chairman's intention to hold consultations as to the best way to deal with this matter.

- (b) Anti-dumping actions in the area of textiles and clothing – Proposal for a specific short-term dispensation in favour of developing Members following full integration of the sector into GATT from January 2005 (WT/GC/M/81)

At its meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the General Council considered a communication from Costa Rica; Guatemala; Hong Kong, China; India; Indonesia; Macao, China; Maldives; Pakistan; People's Republic of China; Thailand and Vietnam concerning anti-dumping action in the area of textiles and clothing, and proposing a specific short-term dispensation in favour of developing Members following full integration of the sector into GATT from January 2005 (WT/GC/W/502).

The representatives of India, Pakistan, Thailand, Indonesia, China, Costa Rica, Chile, Canada, United States, Japan, European Communities and Hong Kong, China, and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

11. Ongoing improvements to the services provided by the Secretariat to Members (WT/GC/M/78, 80)

At its meeting on 10 February 2001, the Chairman informed the General Council of the Secretariat's work over the past few months on several possible approaches to using new and existing technologies to improve the services provided to WTO Members, and in particular to enable the increased involvement in the WTO's work of smaller delegations.

The General Council took note of the statement.

At its meeting on 15 May 2003, Deputy Director-General Mr. Abbott reported on ongoing improvements to the services provided by the Secretariat to Members using new and existing technologies.

The General Council took note of this information.

12. Possibility of a summer break prior to the Fifth Ministerial Conference (WT/GC/M/78)

At the General Council meeting on 10 February 2003, the Chairman said that a number of Members had raised with him the importance of deciding sooner rather than later whether to designate

a one to two-week period prior to the Cancún Ministerial as a summer break. He therefore asked that his successor, together with the Director-General and Deputy Director-General Mr. Abbott, reflect on this matter, and hoped that an understanding could be reached relatively soon.

The General Council took note of the statement.¹⁰

13. Closure of the WTO premises during the meeting of the G-8 in Evian (WT/GC/M/80)

At its meeting on 15 May 2003, the Chairman informed the General Council that since access to the WTO premises was likely to be difficult during the G-8 meeting in Evian, he had agreed with the Director-General following consultations with the Geneva authorities and the police that the WTO buildings should be closed on 2 and 3 June 2003. Consequently, delegates and staff should not come to the WTO during these two days and planned meetings would be rescheduled.

The General Council took note of this information.

14. Traffic congestion in the WTO premises (WT/GC/M/82)

At the General Council meeting on 26-27 and 30 August 2003, the representative of Chile expressed concern regarding traffic congestion in the WTO premises and urged the Secretariat to look into this matter.

The General Council took note of the statement.

15. International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO (WT/GC/M/81)

At its meeting on 24-25 July 2003, the General Council considered the report of the Joint Advisory Group of the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO on its Thirty-sixth Session (ITC/AG(XXXVI)/195).

The Chairman recalled that in keeping with customary practice, this report had been considered initially by the Committee on Trade and Development (CTD) at its meeting on 22 May, and was before the General Council for formal adoption.

The Chairman of the Committee on Trade and Development reported on the Committee's consideration of this report.

The representatives of Cuba, Mexico, Pakistan, Canada, Venezuela, Morocco (on behalf of the African Group) and Côte d'Ivoire, and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements and adopted the report of the Joint Advisory Group in ITC/AG(XXXVI)/195.

¹⁰ In a letter dated 24 March 2003, the Chairman of the General Council informed delegations, *inter alia*, that his consultations indicated that the most practical option would be not to convene major negotiating meetings for a two-week break, between 28 July to 10 August. He added that while all would try to respect that break, it might not be possible to do so absolutely, in view of the limited time available to prepare the Ministerial. He therefore recommended that delegations retain sufficient flexibility in their planning to cope with such eventualities.

16. WTO Pension Plan

(a) Management Board of the WTO Pension Plan (WT/GC/M/78, 80)

At its meeting on 10 February 2003, the Chairman recalled that his intention to propose the candidature of Ms. Rachel Schub (United States) to replace Mr. Linscott (United States) as alternate on the WTO Pension Plan Management Board had been communicated to all Members in a fax sent on his behalf by Deputy Director-General Mr. Abbott in January. Accordingly, he proposed the election of Ms. Schub to hold the office of alternate on the Board during the remainder of the three-year term, expiring on 7 July 2005.

The General Council so agreed.

The Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statement.

At the General Council meeting on 15 May 2003, the Chairman said that given that the Chair, a member and an alternate were no longer available to serve on the Pension Plan Management Board, he wished to inform Members, as indicated in his communication in WT/GC/W/496, that the following representatives had agreed to have their names put forward for election to these posts, respectively:

Chairman: Amb. Stefán Jóhannesson (Iceland), for a period of one year

Member: Mr. Thomas Chan (Hong Kong, China)

Alternate: Mr. Mathias Francke (Chile)

The General Council took note of the statement and agreed to the election of the proposed candidates to the Management Board of the WTO Pension Plan (WT/L/517).

17. Appointment of officers to WTO bodies (WT/GC/M/78, 80¹¹)

At the General Council meeting on 10 February 2003, the Chairman said that in accordance with the Guidelines for appointment of officers to WTO bodies approved by the General Council in December 2002 (WT/L/510), he and his two colleagues, Mr. Bryn (Norway) and Mr. Pérez del Castillo (Uruguay) had conducted consultations on this matter, on the basis of which he considered that there was a consensus on the following slate of names:

General Council	H.E. Mr. Carlos Pérez del Castillo (Uruguay)
-----------------	---

Dispute Settlement Body	H.E. Mr. Shotaro Oshima (Japan)
-------------------------	------------------------------------

¹¹ Carried in the 15 May General Council minutes as "Chairmanship of the Committee on Trade and Development".

Trade Policy Review Body	H.E. Mrs. Mary Whelan (Ireland)
Council for Trade in Goods	H.E. Mr. Milan Hovorka (Czech Republic)
Council for Trade in Services	H.E. Mr. Ousmane Camara (Senegal)
Council for TRIPS	H.E. Mr. Vanu Gopala Menon (Singapore)
Committee on Trade and Environment	H.E. Mr. Peter Brño (Slovak Republic)
Committee on Trade and Development	H.E. Mr. Mohamed Saleck Ould Mohamed Lemine (Mauritania)
Committee on Balance-of- Payments Restrictions	H.E. Dr. Manzoor Ahmad (Pakistan)
Committee on Regional Trade Agreements	H.E. Mr. Jaynarain Meetoo (Mauritius)
Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration	Mr. Joshua C.K. Law (Hong Kong, China)
Working Group on the Relationship between Trade and Investment	H.E. Mr. Luiz Felipe De Seixas Corrêa (Brazil)
Working Group on the Interaction between Trade and Competition Policy	Prof. Frédéric Jenny (France)
Working Group on Transparency in Government Procurement	H.E. Mr. Ronald Saborío Soto (Costa Rica)
Working Group on Trade and Transfer of Technology	H.E. Mr. Stefán Haukur Jóhannesson (Iceland)
Working Group on Trade, Debt and Finance	H.E. Mr. Hernando José Gómez (Colombia)

The General Council took note of the statement and of the consensus on the slate of names.

The Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statement.

At the General Council meeting on 15 May 2003, the Chairman said he understood that H.E. Mr. Ould Mohamed Lemine (Mauritania), who had been nominated to the post of Chairmanship of the Committee on Trade and Development, was unfortunately unable to serve in that capacity at the

present time. In the light of this situation, and following consultations with delegations, he informed the General Council that there was a consensus on the appointment of H.E. Mr. Habib Mansour (Tunisia) to this post. It was his understanding that the formal election of Mr. Mansour would be the first item on the agenda of the CTD's next meeting, which was scheduled for 22 May.

The General Council took note of the statement and of the consensus on this appointment.

18. Chairmanships of the WTO bodies under the TNC (WT/GC/M/82)

At its meeting in January and February 2002, the Trade Negotiations Committee adopted a structure and established a number of bodies to undertake work on the various elements of the Doha Development Agenda under its supervision. The TNC also endorsed certain principles and practices to guide its work, including that the Chairman of the General Council would consult on the chairmanships of the individual bodies, and that the Chairpersons of these bodies would be appointed to serve up to the Fifth Ministerial Conference, at which time all the appointments would be reviewed. The Chairpersons of the bodies under the TNC were subsequently appointed by the General Council at its meeting in February 2002, following consultations undertaken by the General Council Chairman.

At the General Council meeting on 26-27 and 30 August 2003, the Chairman said although appointments of Chairpersons of the bodies under the TNC were to be reviewed at the time of the Ministerial Conference, he considered that, given the heavy workload in connection with the Ministerial Conference, Members would be better placed to conduct this review at the next meeting of the General Council, scheduled for 21-22 October. This would also allow Members more time for consultations as necessary. In the meantime, and keeping in mind the need for maintaining continuity in the process, he proposed that the Chairpersons of these bodies be requested to continue in office until the General Council's review at its meeting in October.

The representative of Brazil and the Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.

19. Election of Chairperson (WT/GC/M/78)

At the General Council meeting on 10 February 2003, the Chairman, as the outgoing presiding officer of the General Council, made a brief statement.

The General Council then unanimously elected Mr. Pérez del Castillo (Uruguay) to the Chair.

The newly-elected Chairman spoke.

The General Council took note of the statements.
