Note from the Chairman of the Working Group

1. The Working Group on Domestically Prohibited Goods and Other Hazardous Substances was established by the Council Decision of 19 July 1989 (L/6553). Its terms of reference require it to examine, in the light of GATT obligations and principles and having regard to the work of other international organizations on these goods and substances, trade-related aspects that may not be adequately addressed, and report to the Council. The Working Group was expected to complete its work by 30 September 1990.

2. Thus far, the Working Group has held eight meetings. On the basis of two proposals which were submitted at the fifth meeting, and the comments received, I circulated, on my own responsibility, a comprehensive paper containing a Draft Decision on Trade in Banned or Severely Restricted Products and Hazardous Substances. This Draft Decision was discussed at the last two meetings of the Group held on 6 July and 14 September 1990, as well as at an informal session held on 13 September 1990.

3. As a result of these discussions, a large number of delegations considered that the Group has been able to make considerable progress and if further intensive negotiations are held during the next three months, it might be possible for the Group to complete its work before the 46th Session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES. The Group has therefore authorized me to request the Council to extend the deadline for completing the work of the Working Group until the end of December 1990.