1. In pursuance of the CONTRACTING PARTIES’ Decision of 12 April 1989 concerning the Trade Policy Review Mechanism (L/6490), special Council meetings are scheduled for 24-26 September and 1-2 October 1991 to conduct reviews of the trade policies and practices of Norway, Switzerland and Nigeria (GATT/AIR/3227). This communication sets out arrangements concerning the review meetings.

   (i) Questions in writing in advance of the meetings

2. As noted by the Council on 11 October 1989, contracting parties may give advance notice in writing of the points they wish to be raised at the review meetings. The Council also noted that this will not limit in any way the scope of discussions at the special Council meetings (C/M/236).

   (ii) Discussants

3. The Decision by the CONTRACTING PARTIES (L/6490) establishing the Trade Policy Review Mechanism provides for the possibility that, in consultation with the contracting party or parties under review, the Chairman of the Council may choose discussants who, in their personal capacity, will introduce the discussions in the review body.

4. Following such consultations, H.E. Mr. Martin Morland and Mr. Janusz Kaczurba will introduce the discussions at the reviews of Norway, Switzerland and Nigeria.

   (iii) Structure of the meetings

5. Trade policy reviews undertaken at special Council meetings cover four broad headings (C/W/607):

   (a) appreciation of the full range of the contracting party’s trade policies and practices;
(b) relevant background: wider economic and developmental needs and the external environment;

(c) impact of the contracting party's trade policies and practices on the functioning of the multilateral trading system; and

(d) general comments by way of assessment and evaluation.

6. As in the June, 1991 review meetings, the Chairman proposes that the review meetings consist of the following three parts:

(a) General objectives of trade policy, including institutional and legal structures of trade policy; questions relating to transparency; the process of liberalization of trade by the country under review, where appropriate; relationships between multilateral, regional and bilateral concerns for the country in question; trade problems faced by the country in world markets.

(b) Use of major trade policy instruments, including tariffs; other import or excise/consumption taxes and levies; import licensing or other controls; quantitative restrictions; safeguard actions; voluntary restraints on imports and/or exports; anti-dumping and anti-subsidy actions; standards, technical regulations, sanitary and phytosanitary regulations; government procurement, State trading, countertrade; export controls, subsidies, financing, promotion and other arrangements including cartels; measures of general application which may have trading effects.

(c) Sectoral aspects of trade policies and practices as they affect trade in the main sectors of the economy of the country under review.

It is proposed that each part be conducted in its entirety before proceeding to the next part. Participants are invited to structure their interventions accordingly.

7. Each review will be conducted according to the following pattern:

(a) Introductory remarks by the Chairman
(b) Introductory remarks by the contracting party under review, covering all areas of the discussion.

Then, in turn, for each of the three parts:

(c) Statement by the first discussant
(d) Statement by the second discussant
(e) Statements and questions from the floor (in part based on written advance notices)
(f) Responses by the contracting party under review (as appropriate in the course of the discussion)
8. The initial full reports by Norway, Switzerland and Nigeria and the relevant reports by the Secretariat are contained in documents C/RM/G/15-17, C/RM/S/15A-17A and C/RM/S/15B-17B. As noted on the cover pages of these reports, press embargoes have been set.

9. The Secretariat has arranged with the contracting parties concerned as well as the journalists in Geneva that the press embargoes will end after the review of the trade policies and practices of the individual contracting parties are expected to be concluded by the Council. More precisely:

(a) the press embargo for Norway will end at 13.00 gmt on Wednesday, 25 September;
(b) the press embargo for Switzerland will end at 13.00 gmt on Thursday, 26 September; and
(c) the press embargo for Nigeria will end at 13.00 gmt on Wednesday, 2 October.

The Secretariat will arrange briefings on the special Council discussions.

10. Minutes of the special Council meeting will be drawn up by the Secretariat. They will be published promptly after the special Council meeting along with the reports by the Government of the contracting party under review and by the Secretariat.

11. In the course of the discussions at the review session, the contracting party under review may indicate that it intends to provide supplementary information in writing on specific points raised during the session. Upon receipt, the Secretariat will circulate this information to all contracting parties. Such information will not be reflected in the minutes of the meeting.