PRESS STATEMENT

Mr. Peter Sutherland, Director-General Designate

In a statement to the press, following the decision by GATT Contracting Parties on his appointment as Director-General, Mr. Sutherland said:

"My appointment as Director-General brings with it an extraordinary responsibility and an enormous personal challenge. In many ways the GATT system holds the key to future world prosperity and a way out of the pain of unemployment which so many nations face today. Above all, it is a multilateral system looking after the interests of countries, large and small, developed and developing. None of the demands of my new job can be more important than safeguarding every one of the varying interests represented among GATT's 111 members.

"Clearly, the immediate priority must be to help the participants of the Uruguay Round secure a quick, comprehensive and far-reaching conclusion to their negotiations. The meeting of the G7 in Tokyo will be crucial - but we will need deeds, not words. Thereafter, the sooner we can get back to a multilateral process in Geneva, the better.

"The fact that we are so close to a deal, is the best possible tribute to Arthur Dunkel, GATT's present Director-General. He has striven for thirteen years to uphold the foundations of the existing GATT system and to establish a new, wider and better, trading system for the coming decades. The Uruguay Round will remain his personal legacy to the world - I can think of few enterprises of more value that have been so personally identified with an international public servant. He has served the GATT with a devotion, patience and a sense of the wider perspectives of trade which I can only hope to emulate.

"Let me also pay tribute to the other nominee in what has been a very amicable competition for the job of Director-General. Julio Lacarte-Muró has a background in international diplomacy, but especially in the GATT, which is second to none. He helped create the GATT in the 1940s and went on to become a driving force in the launching and conduct of the Uruguay Round. I wish him well and look forward to working with him in the future."

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