WHilst document TN.64/39/REV.1 provides that negotiations on the basis of offers tabled by participants should start by a "multilateral confrontation" in the Committee on Agriculture, it does not indicate the procedures to be followed for this exercise. There is considerable uncertainty in the minds of the delegations on this point. Having considered the procedure best calculated to achieve the purpose of the "confrontation", as described in TN.64/39/REV.1, I suggest that the discussion proceed on a product group-by-product group basis. This procedure will afford those governments which have tabled offers with the opportunity for providing explanations on the content and scope of the offers to the interested participants in accordance with paragraph 4 of TN.64/39/REV.1. It will also furnish the occasion for governments which have been unable to make offers on particular products to furnish explanations of their inability to do so. These discussions will prepare the ground for the multilateral and bilateral negotiations foreseen in TN.64/39/REV.1, paragraph 5.

This procedure also has the advantage of meeting the doubts expressed by a number of participants, when TN.64/39/REV.1 was adopted, as to whether the Committee on Agriculture, because of its large membership, would be an unwieldy mechanism for detailed and technical discussion often of direct concern to a limited number of participants. Discussions organized on a product group-by-product group basis will permit active participation by delegations to be varied in accordance with the products and interests involved. The order in which products should be considered can be discussed early in the proceedings.

E. Wyndham White