MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE INFORMAL GROUP OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES HELD ON 29 MARCH 1967

Prepared by the Secretariat

1. Another in a series of regular meetings of the informal group of developing countries in GATT took place on 29 March 1967, under the chairmanship of H.E. Dr. José Antonio Encinas del Pando, Ambassador of Peru. Present were the representatives of Algeria, Argentina, Chile, Cuba, India, Indonesia, Israel, Jamaica, Korea, Pakistan, Peru, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Republic, Uruguay and Yugoslavia.

2. The Chairman informed the group that the representative of Czechoslovakia had visited him and had handed him a document setting out proposals on the terms on which Czechoslovakia's contribution in the Kennedy Round would be applied. Since these would appear to be of interest to developing countries, the Chairman enquired whether the group would be willing to comment on the proposals at the present meeting. The group agreed that this matter might be taken up at a later meeting, when copies of the paper had been made available to the interested delegations in the group.

3. The Chairman recalled that at the Punta del Este meeting developed countries had reaffirmed their intention to consider the possibility of taking such steps as were open to them to make cuts deeper than 50 per cent, or to eliminate duties completely, on products of special interest to less-developed countries, and that the Committee on Trade and Development had recommended that to the maximum extent possible the tariff reductions in respect of products of interest to developing countries should be implemented immediately. Developed countries had maintained that such action on their part would be facilitated if they were given specific indications of the products to be covered. While most developing countries participating in the Kennedy Round had, in their bilateral negotiations with developed countries, already made specific requests for deeper than linear cuts and, in some cases, also for advance implementation of concessions, others had not done so. It had now been proposed that it would be useful if each of the major developed countries participating in the negotiations be supplied with a list showing the products on which it was expected to take such action. The Secretariat had made certain tentative suggestions in this regard and had compiled a summary.
of the offers and trade coverage in respect of the European Economic Community, Japan, United Kingdom and United States. On the basis of that paper, certain delegations of developing countries had already had discussions with the Deputy Director-General. The Chairman invited the group to discuss this matter, with a view to reaching an agreement as soon as possible, having regard to its urgent nature.

4. After an exchange of views, the group agreed that without prejudice to the bilateral negotiations which were in progress between the developing and developed countries, it would be useful for developing countries to bring to the urgent notice of the developed countries the immediate action that could be taken by them in regard to advance implementation and deeper cuts for the successful conclusion of the Kennedy Round at this stage. It was further agreed that separate lists should be addressed to the four major linear countries and that, should it prove necessary, a further list could be addressed to other developed countries. To this end, individual developing countries participating in the Kennedy Round should each establish a list of products and these individual lists would be collated by the secretariat and made into a single document. This would be examined in the group on 4 April. This document, containing four or five lists, would be presented to the developed countries for urgent action by 6 April.

5. As for the coverage of products, it was suggested that individual delegations should bear in mind that the requested concessions were intended for application on a most-favoured-nation basis and consequently the requests should concentrate on products on which tariff reductions would predominantly benefit developing countries; the inclusion of products in which substantial interests rested with the developed countries should be avoided. For the sake of obtaining rapid results, it might be advisable also to omit items which were on the exceptions lists of the respective developed country.

6. The group agreed to the following time-table:

(a) Individual delegations would file their lists of products with the secretariat by 31 March 1967.

(b) The secretariat would collate and make available a compilation of the lists received to the members of the informal group by the afternoon of 3 April 1967.

(c) The informal group would meet on 4 April at 4 p.m. to examine the secretariat compilation.

(d) The final requests lists would be presented to the respective developed countries on 6 April 1967.