MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE INFORMAL GROUP OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES HELD ON 13 AND 21 NOVEMBER 1967

Prepared by the Secretariat

1. A meeting of the informal group of developing countries in GATT was held on 13 November 1967, under the chairmanship of H.E. Dr. José Antonio Encinas del Pando, Ambassador of Peru. The meeting was attended by the representatives of Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Ceylon, Chad, Chile, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Israel, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Korea, Malawi, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Spain, Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, United Arab Republic, Uruguay and Yugoslavia.

2. The Chairman explained that the meeting was convened at the request of certain delegations to discuss matters of interest to developing countries on the agenda of the current session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES and, if possible, to arrive at a consensus on the approach to be followed by developing countries in regard to those matters.

3. Members of the group observed that since the opening of this session the Director-General had submitted a series of suggestions regarding the future work of the CONTRACTING PARTIES in the context of the Programme for the Expansion of International Trade, but that most developed countries had shown a disinclination to commit themselves at this stage to any line of positive action. Developed countries were generally of the view that it should suffice at the present to seek the consolidation of the concessions negotiated in the Kennedy Round and to initiate studies on outstanding questions with a view to exploring the possibility of new initiatives that could be taken in future. This was a highly unsatisfactory situation when viewed against the urgent needs of developing countries. Unless developing countries pressed for a specific and co-ordinated programme of action the high level meeting might produce no major initiatives regarding the expansion of trade of developing countries.

4. It was suggested that developing countries should draw up a specific programme of action based on the known attitudes of developing countries on various outstanding problems, and taking account of the specific trend of discussion in the current session, with particular reference to the proposals presented by the Director-General, the statement of the Chairman of the CONTRACTING PARTIES, the Charter of Algiers, the report of the Ad Hoc Group on the Evaluation of the Kennedy Round and the report of the Committee on Trade and Development. A programme of this kind could be submitted in the name of developing countries in GATT for consideration at the current session.
5. After a discussion the group agreed to establish a working group comprising the representatives of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, India, Israel, Uruguay and Yugoslavia, to draft the joint proposal, it being understood that any other developing country wishing to take part in this work could ask to be co-opted in the group.

6. The informal group reconvened on 21 November 1967 to discuss the draft joint proposal prepared by the working group established at the previous meeting. Present were the representatives of Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Cameroon, Ceylon, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Israel, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Korea, Malawi, Malaysia, Mauritania, Mexico, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Spain, Senegal, Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago, United Arab Republic, Upper Volta, Uruguay and Yugoslavia.

7. Members of the group expressed appreciation for the valuable work done by the working group. It was noted, however, that since the last meeting of the informal group on 13 November 1967 the CONTRACTING PARTIES had agreed on the establishment of a programme of work covering inter alia problems of developing countries. The Drafting Committee set up by the CONTRACTING PARTIES for this purpose included certain developing countries and such views as the developing countries entertained on problems of interest to them had been and were being channelled to the Drafting Committee through those delegations.

8. In the circumstances the informal group agreed to suspend the examination of the draft joint proposal and asked the developing countries on the Drafting Committee to make their best efforts to ensure that the draft being prepared by that Committee was improved in the light of the draft joint proposal. The results of their efforts should be reported back to the informal group for such action as might be deemed necessary.