1. As the Committee is aware, positions budgeted under the Uruguay Round are funded until 31 December 1992, as decided by the Committee when it adopted the budget for 1992. Accordingly, staff recruited for the Round have had their contracts extended until 31 December 1992.

2. In the normal time frame for adoption of the annual budget, the Committee will examine the Director-General's proposals for 1993 in October of this year, and a decision will be taken at the end of that month. The Budget for the Uruguay Round, and hence the funding for staff recruited for the Round, will thus be decided two months before their present contracts are due to expire.

3. Once again a difficult situation has arisen because of the uncertainties surrounding the Round. Since the exact timing of the conclusion of the Round continues to be unknown, an assessment of the organization's needs after the Round, in particular of the need to retain in service staff recruited for it, is difficult to make at this time, and may be no easier to make in October.

4. What is clear, however, as it was in 1989 and in 1991 when this situation arose before, is that these staff will be needed of course as long as the Round continues, and beyond the end of the Round for the follow-up to it. In addition, it has always been assumed that the Round would result in a workload for the Secretariat such that a return to pre-Round staffing levels is inconceivable. This point would be dealt with in the review of post-Round staff requirements which the Committee decided should be carried out by the Secretariat at the appropriate time.

5. It is in the interests of the organization to ensure that the investment it has made in high-calibre staff for the Round is safeguarded, and that those staff, some of whom have been serving since mid-1988, do not leave prematurely, because of the uncertainty surrounding their contractual status. It would be only fair and certainly preferable to dispel that uncertainty as soon as possible. The Secretariat therefore proposes that the Committee agree now that budgetary provision be made for the extension of these positions for a further twelve months to 31 December 1993. The extension of individual contracts would of course be subject to the usual requirements of satisfactory performance being met.
6. In making this proposal, the Secretariat does not wish in any way to imply a judgement about when the Round will end. In its view, whatever the exact timing of the conclusion of the Round, there will be sufficient follow-up work to be done to justify the extension proposed. In addition, even after the conclusion, there will inevitably be a certain period of time required before it is possible to assess the shape of things to come in the aftermath of the Round.

7. There are a total of 18,000 work/days of temporary assistance under the Uruguay Round budget, comprising twenty posts in the Professional category and thirty posts in the General Service category. The estimated cost of extending these posts through 1993 is Sw F 5,900,000.-, comprising salary and related charges.

Point for decision: paragraph 5.