The Acting Chairman of the Committee on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures received, on 28 September 1981, the following communication from the Permanent Mission of Australia.

I attach a statement by the Government of Australia on acceptance of the Agreement on the Interpretation and Application of Articles VI, XVI and XXIII of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.
Statement by the Government of Australia on Acceptance of the Agreement on the Interpretation and Application of Articles VI, XVI and XXIII of the GATT.

It is a matter of regret to the Government of Australia that participants in the MTN were unable to develop more effective disciplines on the use of agricultural export subsidies. The Agreement on the Interpretation and Application of Articles VI, XVI and XXIII of the GATT is heavily imbalanced as between its provisions relating to agricultural and to industrial products.

Notwithstanding the disappointing result, the Government of Australia has decided to accept the Agreement on the expectation that within a reasonable time GATT Contracting Parties will develop disciplines relating to agricultural export subsidies which are substantially equivalent to those adopted in respect of export subsidies on products other than certain primary products (as defined in the Agreement).

In respect of Australian measures which may exist within the purview of the illustrative list at the time of acceptance by the Government of Australia of the Agreement, and where major practical difficulties stand in the way of the Government of Australia bringing such measures promptly into conformity with the Agreement, the Government of Australia will, without prejudice to the rights of other signatories under the General Agreement or this Agreement, examine methods of bringing these measures into conformity within a reasonable time.

In any event the Government of Australia will be reviewing its position in relation to the Agreement in the light of experience.