MEETING OF 16 JULY 1990

Note by the Secretariat

1. The meeting was convened by GATT/AIR/3051 of 9 July 1990. Under the Chairmanship of H.E. Mr. L. Duthie, the Group discussed the following points: present situation regarding the submission of proposals; review and assessment of the proposals; submission of tariff request lists by participants; report of the Chairman of the Group to the GNG; date of the next meeting.

Present situation regarding the submission of proposals

2. The Chairman referred to document NG1/W/36/Rev.3 and noted that to date forty-one tariff proposals had been received and distributed according to the Procedures for the Negotiations adopted by the Group on 30 January 1990. He also informed the Group that a revised proposal had been submitted to the secretariat for circulation to other participants. He then invited the delegations who had not yet submitted proposals to indicate to the Group when their authorities intended to do so.

3. One participant stated that his country’s proposal was ready and would be submitted shortly. He indicated his authority’s willingness to adapt the offer in light of the progress made in the market-access group negotiations as a whole.

4. Another participant expressed his government’s intention to submit a revised proposal. He mentioned that his government had undertaken autonomous reform measures since May 1990 and that it hoped to receive recognition for those liberalizing measures. He reminded the Group that his country’s proposal should be considered in the context of the Punta del Este Declaration, Part I B, which dealt with developing countries.

Review and assessment of the proposals

5. The Chairman reported that a total of four meetings had been held to review and assess the available proposals. Twenty-seven out of the forty-one proposals so far received had been examined. He referred to
document IDB/INF/1/Rev.14 which gave information on the situation of the submission of tariff and trade data and explained that due to either the late submission of proposals or the lack of tariff and/or trade data, not all the proposals had been analysed.

Submission of tariff request lists by participants

6. The Chairman recalled that in the Procedures for the Negotiations (MTN/GNG/NG1/17) it was stipulated that participants were expected to submit preliminary request lists for improvements of the submitted proposals. This procedure was supposed to allow participants to enter into bilateral negotiations as soon as possible. He informed the Group that to date the secretariat had received tariff requests from about twenty countries. He urged those countries having submitted requests to provide the secretariat with copies of those requests, as foreseen in the Procedures for the Negotiations.

7. According to one delegation, the Procedures for the Negotiations established by the Group had prevented his authorities from submitting a request list. He recalled that the proposal submitted by his government on behalf of the least-developed countries requested the duty-free entry for products for which these countries, individually or collectively, were principal suppliers. Taking into consideration Part I paragraph B 7 of the Punta del Este Declaration and the development, financial and trade needs of these countries, his authorities were of the opinion that this group of countries should have been allowed to submit request lists without forwarding offers.

Report of the Chairman of the Group to the GNG

8. The Chairman had prepared a draft report on the activities of the Group which he intended to forward to the GNG under his own responsibility. Suggestions and comments offered by several delegations were noted and the report subsequently modified. The report was to be circulated as MTN/GNG/NG1/43. The Chairman proposed that in addition to the series of intensive bilateral and plurilateral negotiations being held during the weeks of 16 July and 23 July, another series of such negotiations be held during the second and third weeks of September.

9. A participant conveyed his government's concern regarding the pace at which the negotiations were moving. To accelerate this process, he suggested that each delegation, during the present series of intensive bilateral negotiations, should identify items in which its trading partner was a principal or significant supplier. Negotiations could thus be carried out on items of interest to both parties. This system would, in the view of his authorities, not only simplify the negotiating process but would also help in establishing a final agreement within the deadline.
10. A few participants expressed interest in starting a series of intensive negotiations already by the first week of September.

**Date of the next meeting**

11. Subject to confirmation by the GNG, the Group agreed that the next meeting would be held on 19 September 1990.