MULTILATERAL TRADE
NEGOTIATIONS
THE URUGUAY ROUND

Import Procedures - Cost of Services Rendered
Statement by the European Communities

It is the opinion of the European Communities that fees, dues and other charges which are linked to the carrying out of import procedures need special examination on a multilateral level. Public administrations usually justify the perception of such fees, dues and other charges by the "service" which they render to economic operators. These charges resemble import duties both by the way in which they operate and by their effects. The perception thereof might put into question the delicate balance of consolidated rights.

The European Communities believe that past GATT experience in this specific field provides a useful basis for a broader examination of the issue. The object of such an examination would be to create greater transparency and security in the conditions for international trade.

To that effect the European Communities suggest that the work of the Group might usefully concentrate on a multilateral understanding covering all fees, dues and other charges relating to import procedures without at this stage prejudging the legal form of such an understanding.

The European Communities believe that in carrying out its work the Group may usefully address, amongst other, the following questions:

- what kind of "services" should be subject to fees, dues and other charges at the time of importation;

- what types of fees, dues and other import charges should be perceived for such "services";

- how to ensure that the amount of such fees, dues and other charges is limited to the real cost of services rendered;

- how to ensure transparency, predictability and minimum interference with trade.