Group of Negotiations on Goods (GATT)
Negotiating Group on Natural Resource-Based Products

NEGOTIATING GROUP ON NATURAL RESOURCE-BASED PRODUCTS

Communication from the European Communities

The following communication dated 15 October 1990, has been received from the Commission of the European Communities.

Pursuant to your summing up at the meeting of the TNC of 26 July 1990 (MTN/TNC/15) on access negotiations, please find enclosed four communications from the European Communities respectively on tariffs, non-tariff measures, natural resource-based products and tropical products.

I shall be sending annexes to the communications on non-tariff measures, natural resource-based products and tropical products as soon as possible.

Referring to its submission of 25 June 1990 regarding the negotiations on NRBPs the Community hereby wishes to draw attention to the following elements concerning developments and progress in this sector:

On the question of tariffs and non-tariff measures the Community reiterates its commitment to the achievement of the objectives as set out in the Punta del Este and Montreal Declarations. To this end, the Community confirms that its tariff proposal covering industrial products also covers NRBPs falling under chapters 25-97 of the Combined Customs Tariff. Furthermore, that the Community is prepared to extend a tariff reduction offer covering certain fish products as indicated in the Annex to this communication. This enlargement of the Community's offer to tariff positions initially excluded is meant to take account of concerns expressed by a number of exporting developing countries.

As already pointed out on several occasions the Community's preconditions for the tariff negotiations are (a) a wide participation, (b) a co-ordinated approach linking tariff and non-tariff measures, (c) a binding, as a general rule, of all tariffs, a reduction of high tariffs, an elimination of tariff peaks and the achievement of more uniform rates of duty.
The Community has consistently maintained that a close relationship can be seen to exist between, on the one side, the occurrence of export restrictive measures in a wide sense and, on the other, the recourse to high tariffs or tariff escalation in the importing countries. The Community offer is conditional on a satisfactory solution being found to the non-tariff measures of an export restrictive nature as highlighted in the above submission. Moreover if a positive result can be achieved on this basis, the Community would be prepared to consider tariff reductions beyond the level dictated by its formula approach. This readiness may notably be beneficial to the export interests of developing countries.