COMMUNICATION FROM AUSTRIA

Preliminary conditional Offer of Austria Concerning Initial Commitments in Trade in Services

The following communication is circulated at the request of the delegation of Austria.

1. Creating a comprehensive régime for progressive liberalization of trade in services is for Austria an essential part of the Uruguay Round negotiations.

2. Austria has therefore been actively participating in the negotiating process and intends to continue to do so in order to further negotiations at all levels.

3. Austria considers the early submission of initial commitments necessary in order to revive the negotiating process, the subsequent negotiations should, however, attribute priority to the framework agreement and the sectorial annexes, on which the national list will ultimately depend.

4. At this stage of negotiations Austria submits her initial offer of commitments. A more detailed offer is at present under preparation and will be submitted in due time.

5. Austria is prepared to bind in principle its existing market access and national treatment régimes with respect to measures affecting cross-border supply of specified services, movement of consumers and establishment of commercial presence by foreign service providers.

6. This offer pertains to measures at a national and sub-national level by governmental and non-governmental regulatory bodies. New measures would on the whole not be more restrictive with regard to market access or national treatment than existing ones. The re-regulation of existing measures would follow the same principles.

7. This offer is conditional upon a satisfactory outcome of the current negotiations on trade in services. Austria therefore reserves the right to modify, supplement, reduce or withdraw this offer in view of the progress of negotiations on the framework agreement, the sectorial annexes, in
particular the land-transport annex, the level of commitments assumed by other parties, as well as due to requirements resulting from ongoing regional integrations efforts.

8. This offer is presented as a basis for further discussions to secure comparability of initial commitments. Austria is prepared to enter into negotiations with other parties on additional market access and national treatment concessions in certain areas. A balanced outcome of negotiations would require corresponding commitments by other parties in areas of interest to Austria.