

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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STATEMENT BY MRS. CAROLA SÁNCHEZ-PENÁ DE LORENZ,  
CHARGÉE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOLIVIA

The international community has been following closely recent events in Bolivia and consequently no one is unaware of the grave economic crisis that is affecting it because of virtual stagnation of the national economy in recent years.

This is due to the fact that the international market for raw materials, on which the economies of many developing countries depend, has been adversely affected by declining prices, permanent threat of the sale of strategic reserves, and other mechanisms that affect the marketing of these products. Prices which are not remunerative in certain cases are not sufficient to cover increasingly high production costs.

Bolivia is being seriously affected by this situation, being a producer of raw materials, and considers it essential to be assured of fair and equitable prices as well as better marketing conditions for its raw materials. It therefore supports the decision that appropriate action should be taken to eliminate factors affecting trade in the principal non-ferrous minerals and metals.

The Bolivian people is making countless efforts in order to make possible economic recovery which, on the basis of the guidelines laid down by the Democratic Government of Dr. Hernan Siles Suazo, can allow my country's economic processes to be reactivated.

In the past few days a series of measures has been announced which are designed to strengthen the country's producing sectors in order to reduce inflation and seek balance-of-payments equilibrium. All these call for effective international co-operation.

The Bolivian economy is going through the most acute crisis in its history; in this context, we are availing ourselves of this international forum in order to ask for understanding and support from the developed countries so as to make feasible the refinancing of Bolivia's external debt and for that we are counting on the solidarity of the countries of the Andean group, of Latin America and of the third world.

Servicing of the national debt and consequently the debt itself is in a difficult situation because of the monetary and financial policy of certain countries through their high interest rates and because of deterioration of the terms of trade.

The protectionist policy imposed by developed countries on developing countries is hampering market access for products on competitive terms. In some instances the lack of access is virtually absolute. The oft-repeated statements made by developing countries both in GATT and in other international fora have not met with any positive response and Bolivia considers that, as a matter of urgency, common political actions should be undertaken to eliminate and reduce tariff barriers as a manifest contribution to establishing a new international economic order.

Lastly, we wish to underline that among other important measures needed in the international community, priority should be given to carrying out the commitments entered into within GATT and to the adoption of special measures in favour of the developing countries.

We wish to express our faith in real and efficacious impact of the system.